THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

EDWARD J. F. TOZER

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THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

GEORGE TEMPLER'S OLD HORN.

THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

A HISTORY OF THE HUNT FROM ITS FOUNDATION, COVERING THE PERIOD OF OVER A HUNDRED YEARS, WITH INCIDENTAL REFERENCE TO OTHER HUNTING PACKS

EDWARD J. F. TOZER

ILLUSTRATED, INCLUDING A COMPLETE SERIES OF THE MASTERS AND WITH MAP

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

AGENT: MORTON WOOLLEY, TEIGNMOUTH

1916

GEORGE TEMPLER'S FAREWELL TO HIS OLD HORN

Though toil hath somewhat worn thy frame,
And time hath marred thy beauty,
Come forth, lone relic of my fame,
Thou well hast done thy duty.

Time was when other tongues would praise
Thy wavering notes of pleasure;
Now, miser-like, alone I gaze
On thee, a useless treasure.

Some hearts may prize thy music still,
But, ah! how changed the story,
Since first Devonia felt the thrill
That roused her sporting glory.

Grace still in every vale abounds,
But one dear charm is wanting,
No more I hear my gallant hounds
In chorus blithely chaunting.

And there my steed has found a rest,
Beneath the mountain heather
That oft, like comrades sworn, we've prest
In pleasure's train together.

And some, who at thy call would wake,
Hath friendship long been weeping;
A shriller note than thine must break
Their deep and dreamless sleeping.

I, too, the fading wreath resign,
For friends and fame are fleeting,
Around his bolder brow to twine,
Where younger blood is beating.

Henceforth, be mute, my treasured Horn,
Since time hath marred thy beauty,
And I, like thee, by toil am worn—
We both have done our duty.

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BY

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PREFACE

A HUNT that can claim to have been "established for over a century" and can boast of a succession of masters unbroken during that period, save for one short season ninety years ago, is certainly entitled to its history. The mere desire, however, to see justice done to a venerable institution was not alone responsible for the production of this work. So long as hunting exists the past history of a hunt will always be of some interest, and, at times, of some value, to hunting men, especially to members of the particular hunt concerned. This interest increases as the vista of bygone years lengthens, and men begin to live more in the past than in the future. Memory, however, is fickle and leads to surprising mistakes; and tradition has no chance of life in these days; so that, in the case of the South Devon Hunt, where changes of scene and players have been many and confusing, there appeared a likelihood of the true facts and sequence of events becoming obscured, if not lost altogether. But to have either interest or value, a history must be true. My chief aim, therefore, has been accuracy; I have endeavoured, as far as possible, not to make a statement of fact without first verifying it. In some cases the authority for the statement is quoted; where it is not, either the fact

is within my own personal knowledge, or the statement is made on the authority of my hunting journal, the hunt minutes, hound lists, newspapers of the period, the works given in the list of those consulted, or other authentic records or sources of information. The trouble and research involved have been amply compensated for by the ready help received wherever it has been applied for.

My thanks should first be tendered to the Misses Carew of Haccombe for their encouragement and the loan of Sir Walter Carew's most interesting hunting journal and for permission to reproduce the pictures at Haccombe. To the family of Templer, including Captain J. G. E. Templer of Lindridge, his brother Mr. A. H. Templer, his sister Miss Templer, and the late R. W. Templer of Teignmouth, I am indebted for help with the opening chapter of the book on George Templer of Stover; in particular, to Captain Templer for the loan of the original "treasured horn," of which my friend, Mr. Hubert Parry, has produced the fine autochrome forming the frontispiece of this book, and to the late R. W. Templer for allowing me to reproduce his hitherto unpublished portrait of George Templer. I have to thank Miss Mohun-Harris for a similar permission in respect of the early painting of her father, the late Mr. Christopher Arthur Harris, also for the loan of original letters of Mr. Russell and Mr. Trelawny; and Lady Baker very kindly helped me in tracing the approximate date when Sandford Orleigh, her beautiful home for many years past, was built by George Templer.

In connection with the opening chapter I am also indebted to Mr. Flemming, of the well-known firm of saddlers, Whippy and Steggall, in North Audley Street, for assistance in establishing the fact that the use of the curved hunting-horn lingered in South Devon after the straight horn had come into general use elsewhere.

I feel grateful in an especial way for assistance received from complete strangers. Among these, Lord Robert Manners, who has no interest in the hunt, took the trouble to verify the facts concerning the draft that Templer sent to Belvoir, and to supply in addition some very interesting particulars concerning it; Sir John C. H. Seale tried, as his father had done, to find for me the record, known to exist, of Sir Henry Seale's hunting career, and though unsuccessful in this, he was able to supply a photograph of that popular master of old; Miss Turner, the Hon. Sec. of the Hambledon, is to be thanked for giving, through the kind offices of Mr. C. B. Fry, leave and opportunity to copy the only known likeness of John King of Fowlescombe, which is in the archives of the Hambledon Hunt; and Lady Mary Leslie put at my disposal all the information she had concerning her father's mastership, including his diary, and cheerfully submitted to the ordeal of two visits from a photographer. Indeed, but for her kind aid, it would have been difficult, at this distance of time, to glean any reliable particulars concerning Captain Haworth's day.

I have also gratefully to acknowledge the willing

assistance received from those more or less intimately connected with the South Devon. Mr. R. H. Watson, who seems to keep his memory, like his physical power, as fresh as ever, took me back further than anyone else. The diary of Major R. C. Tucker, again, rendered excellent service, as it did when "put in evidence" in the course of the arbitration by the M.F.H. Association on the question of the hunt boundaries. Mr. Albert Gould is another who can carry the story back into the years. I owe very much to Mr. A. S. Rendell for furnishing, amid the pressure of business, much information and material that could not be obtained elsewhere, including the *dossier* of the arbitration referred to. Mr. W. R. Rendell, from his intimate and practical knowledge, was particularly helpful, especially in connection with the chapters dealing with Dr. Gaye and Mr. Singer, and contributed a delightful descriptive account of three record runs during the mastership of the first named. The long connexion of Mr. G. H. Hext with the fortunes of the hunt made his ready assistance of the greatest value, and he was also good enough to place the minute books at my disposal. Mr. Hext's recollection goes back to Westlake's time, and his appreciation of that good sportsman is backed up by that of Mr. R. Vicary, Mr. H. S. Wright, Messrs. W. C. and J. Clack, and Mr. C. E. R. Walker; while to Mr. R. H. Westlake of Wood Hall, Exbourne, I am indebted for notes of his great-uncle's family history and for the photograph of the silver cup presented to him.

Without the help of Mrs. Rawes and Mrs. Rudge the chapter treating of the mastership of their father, Mr. Lane, would have been more slender even than it is. Both Mr. A. Hingston and Mr. J. J. Cross have, at one time or another, kept albums of newspaper cuttings and reports which have been most useful. Mr. Ley of Trehill, who has discarded his pink coat, has fortunately kept his old Haldon buttons, which are reproduced. Some of the former masters, too, have been most kind and patient, namely: Mr. Studd, Major St. Maur, Mr. Vicary, Mr. Brunskill and Major Cooke Hurle. Others who have helped in one way or another in giving or procuring information are: Mr. Parnell Tucker, Mr. R. Phillpotts, Miss Simpson, Mr. B. D. Webster, Mr. J. Gould Drew, Mr. R. M. Bourne, Mr. J. D. P. Goodwin, the Rev. A. Woolcombe, Frank Collings and Philip Back.

At one time I feared that it would be impossible to carry out my intention of giving a likeness of every master. Thanks, however, to Mr. A. C. Loveys for searching out one of Westlake; to Mr. F. Marshal for unearthing one of Ross when I had almost abandoned hope; to the Torbay Royal Yacht Club for allowing me to copy the one of Lord Haldon in its possession; to the proprietors of the *County Gentleman* for free permission to reproduce the portrait of Mr. Studd from *Land and Water*, of which they own the copyright, and to those already mentioned as having contributed portraits, the blanks were at last all made good. Colonel Taylor, also, supplied a photograph of Templer's colleague the Rev. Harry Taylor.

Nor must I forget the sporting snapshots taken, in Mr. Brunskill's time, by Miss Ainger, from which I was allowed to make my own selection.

The question of the map was a difficult one. Here, again, I had to rely upon the kind help of others. Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. Gilbert Spiller, former masters of the Mid-Devon, who can speak with exceptional knowledge and authority; Mr. A. W. Luxton, master of the Eggesford, and Mr. J. A. Tattershall, hon. sec. of that pack; Sir Ian Heathcote-Amory and Mr. Lewis Mackenzie of the Tiverton; Mr. W. Coryton and Mrs. Brunskill have all taken particular pains to supply the most accurate information at their disposal.

To all the above I tender my grateful thanks. Without their ready co-operation and help, freely given according to the material at their command, my undertaking would have been impossible.

I have also to make my acknowledgments to the proprietors of the *Field*, *Baily's Magazine* and *Baily's Hunting Directory*, besides the authors of the various works mentioned in the list of works consulted, all of which have been drawn upon somewhat freely.

I am aware that I am not entitled to claim for this book any literary merit, but its object will have been quite attained if it should succeed in fostering a spirit of loyalty and gratitude to the South Devon Hunt, to which many of us are indebted for some of the happiest moments in our lives.

The Old Cottage, Teignmouth,
1916.

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

(The Partition of the Country refers only to the period when a separate pack was kept on the Haldon side. For temporary loans of country see chapters devoted to the Masters marked *. The arrangement with the Mid-Devon Hunt is on a more permanent basis: see Chapter XVIII.)

THE ORIGINAL COUNTRY

—[1] to 1826	Mr. Templer	(Mr. Templer's)
1827 ,, 1829	Mr. King	(Mr. King's)
1829 ,, 1843	Sir W. Carew	(Sir W. Carew's; *also* The Devon)
1843 ,, 1845	Captain Haworth	(The Devon)
1845 ,, 1849	Mr. Lane	(The Devon)[2]
1849 ,, 1851	Sir H. Seale	(Sir H. Seale's)
1851 ,, 1856	Mr. Whidborne	(The South Devon)
1856 ,, 1865	Sir H. Seale	(Sir H. Seale's; *also* The South Devon)
1865 ,, 1875	Mr. Westlake	(The South Devon)
1875 ,, 1878	Mr. Ross	(The South Devon)

PARTITION

HALDON SIDE

1878 to 1882	Sir L. Palk and Sir J. Duntze	(The Haldon)
1882 ,, 1884	Mr. Studd	(The South Devon)
1884 ,, 1886	Lord Haldon	(Lord Haldon's)
1886 ,, 1891	Mr. Studd	(The South Devon, Exeter Division)

[1] See p. 21.

[2] The name "South Devon," though already used during Mr. Lane's mastership, was not officially adopted until later. See page 72.

NEWTON SIDE

1878 to 1879	Mr. Tanner	(The South Devon)
1879 ,, 1882	Mr. Ross	(The South Devon)
1882 ,, 1885	Mr. Whidborne	(1882–4 Mr. Whidborne's) (1884–5 The South Devon)
1885 ,, 1891	Dr. Gaye	(The South Devon)

REUNION

1891 to 1893	Dr. Gaye	(The South Devon)
1893 ,, 1897	Mr. St. Maur*	(The South Devon; *also* Mr. St. Maur's)
1897 ,, 1901	Mr. Vicary and Mr. Singer	(The South Devon)
1901 ,, 1907	Mr. Singer*	(The South Devon)
1907 ,, 1913	Mr. Brunskill*	(The South Devon)
1913 ,, 1915	Major Cooke Hurle*	(The South Devon)
1915 ,, —	Mr. W. Whitley and Mr. H. Whitley*	(The South Devon)

HUNT BUTTONS

The Haldon Hounds — Mr. Westlake's and Mr. Stubbs — Lord Haldon's

Dr. Gaye's — The "Receipt" Button — Mr. Singer's

Messrs. Whitley's

To face page 1

THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

INTRODUCTION

Nimrod on Devonshire hunting—His limitations as a critic—Satisfaction of overcoming difficulties—Dialect and nomenclature—Character of the country—Moor and "In-country"—Limits of the hunt—Banks and walls—Scenting qualities—Wet weather on Haldon—Scent on Dartmoor—"Hectors of the Moor"—Fascination of Dartmoor—Exmoor and Dartmoor contrasted—Wire—Attitude of new landowners—Ignorance of country usage—Mire and bog—An unpleasant adventure—The right type of hound—Difference of opinion—Patience versus pace—A hunt without a pack of its own—Type of horse—Mr. Whidborne's stamp—Harriers and foxhounds as neighbours—The Dart Vale and Haldon—Dearth of hunting landowners—Shooting tenants and their keepers—A claim for find-money—Question of legal liability—Decision of the court—The farmers good friends to hunting—Damage fund—Generous behaviour of Mr. Ward-Wreford—Presentation on his retirement—Financial difficulties—Subscription—Ethics of capping—Mr. Reginald Herbert's opinion—The field—Unbroken succession of masters—Loans of country—Plan of present work—Difficulties of treatment—Chronological table of masters.

"Devonshire is, certainly, the worst hunting country I ever was in. . . . It is the only county in which I have heard a pack of hounds called a 'cry of dogs,' or *a cow called a bullock*." (Nimrod's *Hunting Tours*.)

"NIMROD" was undoubtedly a first-rate judge of hunting. He made the sport his business, and, in the course of it, visited nearly every hunt in Great Britain. Yet his criticism of Devonshire hunting leaves Devonians unmoved. For not only was Nimrod—thorough sportsman though he was—more of a riding man than a hound man, but if we in the far West are denied the mad ecstasy of "leading the cream of the cream in the Shire of

shires," we find compensation in things and circumstances that do not fall to the lot of those who make up the crowded fields of the midlands. The opportunities of seeing hound-work at its best and of becoming acquainted with individual hounds, the total absence of all artificiality, the stoutness of the foxes, the good-fellowship amongst the members of the field, who all know one another, the personal friendship of the most sporting of farmers, the civility of the country people and the glorious scenery of the most beautiful of counties—all these give a charm to the sport that Nimrod knew nothing of.

But, beyond this, there is, to my mind, a satisfaction as great in having gone well to the end of a run in a rough and intricate country, especially if one is not over-well mounted, as there is in having kept a good place in a quick thing in the Shires. A satisfaction in having done it, be it noted; not the same rapture or the same glorious thrill in the doing. But to have got quickly through a rideless woodland, riding by ear all the way; to have hit off the only crossing of the boggy bottom below, taken the right turn at the top of the next hill with hounds out of sight and hearing, jumped the big boundary bank, bustled round the stony lane instead of attempting to cross the impossible valley, taken the right line of gates or jumpable fences and been in time to see the fox rolled over; to have done all this, with no pilot in front and nothing but eye, ear and instinct as guides, puts a man on as good terms with himself as to have been in front, let us say, with the Cottesmore, from Cold Overton to Thorpe Trussels.

As for our nomenclature, it must be conceded that Nimrod had some cause for surprise. We do use some rather curious expressions. He himself was

doubtless spoken of at the time of his visit, as he would be were he to appear in Devon to-day, as a "gentleman from up country." And anyone seeking to ascertain more definitely his domicile of origin, would probably be told that he came from "the other side of London," a locality considered to be so remote as to put an end to further enquiries.

The country hunted by the South Devon Hounds is, naturally, not dissimilar in character to the countries of other hunts in Devon. It has, however, more variety than some and includes within its borders a large slice of moorland which is not common to all. This moorland consists of the eastern portion of Dartmoor,[1] and is considered to be the best part of the country. The remainder, called, in contradistinction to the Moor, the "in-country," comprises cultivated lands and woodlands, and also a stretch of flinty moorland which reaches from two miles above Teignmouth to within four miles of Exeter, and is quite separate and different in character from the Moor proper.

The limits of the South Devon country are treated of in the Note on the map at the end of this book. The reader's attention is particularly drawn to the details in this Note, as I hope that I have succeeded, after comparison of old sources of information and personal reference to neighbouring masters and others entitled to give an authoritative opinion, in settling a question that has hitherto been somewhat neglected.

With the exception of the level land in the valleys of the Exe and Teign, which nowadays are very

[1] Dartmoor is officially divided into four quarters: North, South, East and West. The Eastern portion referred to does not correspond exactly with the Eastern "quarter."

rarely indeed touched by hounds, the country is, like the rest of Devon, hilly. The enclosures are small and separated from each other by banks. These banks are for the most part big and broad, giving a good foothold to the horse which does them "in twice," jumping first to the top and then jumping or sliding down. They have no ditch, and, as they are often from four to six feet in width and five or six or more feet in height, one wonders whence came the material from which they are formed. Some of them are stone-faced, and nearly all have a thick hedge of hazel, beech, or other growth on the top, and they are formidable-looking obstacles to those unaccustomed to this type of fence. On the Moor there are no banks. All the fences there are walls, built up of loose granite boulders and stones. Most of them have a gap; if there is none, one is easily made by pushing off the smaller stones which are always on the top. This may not sound a very heroic proceeding, but it is rendered necessary by the size of the walls themselves, the gradients and the risk of landing on a heap of granite boulders. Besides, we do not all ride three hundred guinea hunters!

Taken as a whole, the country is a good scenting one. The range of heath-covered hills known as Haldon, before referred to, is an exception, the land being poor and the reverse of good scenting. Incidentally, it is also, owing to the sharp flints and the short dense gorse with which it is covered, very trying to the feet of hounds. The popular idea holds that Haldon never carries a scent except when so wet that the water splashes up in a cloud over the backs of the hounds as they run. This, like most other theories in regard to scent, has been

disproved on many occasions, though it is probably true that very wet weather generally suits Haldon better than the other extreme.

One may almost venture to say that on Dartmoor there is always a scent. The granite foundation is covered to the depth of many feet by peat and topped with virgin turf. There are no coverts on the Moor, so foxes lie in the open, either in the bogs, or on the open heather, or among the rocks with which the face of the Moor is in many parts thickly strewn. As a result, a fox often jumps up in view, and goes away with the pack "right on his back." But these foxes are very stout, descendants of those "Hectors of the Moor" that, in days of yore, tested the stamina of the hounds of Templer and of Bulteel, and they stand a long time before hounds and frequently make good their point in some distant tor or clitter of rocks, secure from spade or terrier. One of these sanctuaries is the big Rubble-heap at Heytor, which, as a valuable nursery, makes compensation for the runs it robs us of.

One of the curious features of the Moor is the peculiar fascination it exercises over people, hunting men included. I have known men come down to South Devon to live, who had been accustomed to hunting in good, rideable countries, and at first they feared and hated Dartmoor. The hills, the rocks, the rabbit holes and the bogs upset them, figuratively and sometimes literally as well. But as soon as they have had time to get used to these things, they come to love Dartmoor and its hunting as much as we natives do. Of this sort was a visitor to Exmoor that I met out with the Devon and Somerset. He told me that at home his heart was in his mouth when he jumped, but that it went back into its place

between the fences. "But here," he said, "it is in my mouth all the time." Yet there is a good deal of difference between Exmoor and Dartmoor. This difference is neatly, if paradoxically, expressed in the saying quoted by Mr. Evered in his interesting *Staghunting with the Devon and Somerset:* "On Exmoor you can ride everywhere except where you can't; on Dartmoor you can't ride anywhere except where you can." Those who know both forests[1] will appreciate the truth of the contrast.

The country is fairly free from wire, that is, from hidden wire, although some does exist in places. This is due doubtless in part to the nature of the fences, which, as stated, are banks, and in part to the consideration of the farmers. But in two or three parts of the country large areas are enclosed with barbed wire which interferes sadly with the sport. It is not suggested that this is due to any active hostility to hunting. The tendency of the times is for land to get into the hands of successful business men. Many of these, it is a pleasure to record, are endowed with quick perceptions which enable them soon to fill the rôle of country gentlemen with credit to themselves and with satisfaction to their neighbours. There are some, on the other hand, who seem unable to appreciate that the ownership of land has its obligations, or to realize what is expected of them in their new position. While spending largely for benevolent and philanthropic purposes, they know nothing of the tastes and habits of country people, or of the great part that hunting plays in the life of the country-side. They do not see that, by interfering with a sport that has been

[1] The forests of Dartmoor and Exmoor, like the Scotch deer forests, have no trees.

recognized and encouraged by generations of former owners of their newly acquired acres, they are depriving the inhabitants, condemned by circumstance to live at home all the year round, of the one form of recreation best suited to relieve the monotony of a somewhat colourless existence.

Reference has been made to the bogs of Dartmoor. There are two varieties: the wet bog, locally called a Mire, in the valleys; and the Bog proper, consisting of dry, powdery peat, on the very summit of the hills. The latter are worse than the former and more difficult to distinguish from sound ground. There are also gradations between the two. I do not recall ever hearing of any authentic case of a man or a horse being bogged irretrievably. One bad experience, among many, occurred with the Mid-Devon hounds on Boxing Day, 1892. For five miles we had galloped over sound turf. Then the character of the ground changed, and the frozen crust of the bog lured us on for a considerable distance before we broke through. Soon half a dozen or more horses were down at once and the plunging and struggling began. Presently the horses subsided, too blown for further effort, and we were able to survey the scene. All around, horses in various positions: one on its side, another sitting up like a dog, a third with all four legs underground; on the edge of the bog, a knot of horsemen who had pulled up in time, clustered round the "Bishop of Dartmoor," the Rev. W. H. Thornton, whose exhortation to "come back" we should gladly have followed if we could; and, away in the distance, the pack running on, unattended, into the silence of the forest.

Meanwhile Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. Prickman,

wide on our left, being only two together, were in a worse predicament. Here is "Pidgon's"[1] vivid description of what befell the pair:

"... We see them (the hounds) racing over the Turfties pointing for the Cut, a moorland crossing between Lydford and Post Bridge. 'Tis a rough bit of country; rough at all times, but terrible now in the hard frost.... Shall we try a record run over the Turfties? There's a frost and they may keep up? Yes, say we; but yonder hill by Dart Head with its more than a dozen dismounted riders should have been a warning. But it isn't, and we only think of it after, and 'after wit is good for nothing.' Our blood is up and we dash on a bogland where the peat stands in beds of ten or twelve feet in depth. The first ten yards finishes the gallop, the second the trot, and the third the walk; then to dismount and lead, and then horses lose their heads, break the crust of the peat, and the leading mare is stuck fast with all four legs, up to her belly in the holding earth. Now, 'tis off with the saddle, off with the coats, a pull to and a dig round each leg, and, with coat underneath, one struggle frees her a little; then a readjustment of coats, then another effort by the gallant beast, and she stands trembling on the bog, and again the old grey moor has beaten us and proved herself impassable...."[2]

The danger of a bog lies in the risk of being struck or trampled on by a plunging horse.

From the nature of the country and the breed of foxes to the stamp of hound required is a natural transition. Here we are at once on debatable ground. There are those who hold that the best-

[1] Our local "Brooksby": the late Mr. J. D. Prickman.
[2] *Western Morning News*, 28th December, 1892.

bred hounds obtainable will answer best in this as in every other country. Others advocate a harrier cross. The former point to the number of foxes that get to ground as proof that well-bred hounds do not go even fast enough. Those of the other school urge that the modern foxhound, large of frame and of immense bone carried right down to the foot, may do well enough on the moor (if he does not shake his shoulders to pieces on the rocks), but that he is unsuited to a country where hounds are continually being brought to their noses by lanes, arable land and other impediments; that he is bred from winners at Peterborough who win on looks alone; that, even if he does come from good working stock, such stock is precluded by country and circumstance from acquiring, and consequently from transmitting, the qualities of patience and perseverance in the necessary degree; and that it is not so much the pace that matters as the time that is lost at a check by overrunning the scent. All these, and others, are well-known stock arguments and are trotted out by both sides, who also point to particular examples in support of their respective theories.

The matter is certainly one of first importance; and yet, paradoxically enough, it is one which in practice may be ignored. For the South Devon Hunt has no pack of its own, and cannot therefore presume to dictate to a master who is good enough to bring his own pack what manner of hound he should breed. Therefore, though full of interest and giving scope for a long dissertation, the subject is one that need not be further pursued here.

With regard to the horse required to cross the country, much must depend on the qualifications and ambitions of his rider. A light-weight will be

well carried and see much sport on a well-bred pony. A pony's activity in getting up and down steep hills more than compensates for his shorter stride. A heavier man will, of course, need a bigger animal, but as long as the latter has strength and quality, the less he is in height, the better. "Long, low and lusty" was the stamp the late Mr. Whidborne liked—when he could get it. Clean action and good legs and feet are more essential here than in many other countries, on account of the amount of road-work entailed in a day's hunting, and in road-work I include lanes of the roughest description. Good bottom is of more importance than speed; and, above all, whatever you ride must be handy and must understand cramped places. For the moor, a horse cannot be too well-bred, provided he is up to the weight required, temperate and well-mannered. There is a great difference in the way horses get over the rough ground and rocks on the moor; some pitch and flounder terribly, while others go "like oil," or as if they were on wheels.

Devonshire is a great country for harriers. All hunting men know the difficulties that sometimes arise between harriers and foxhounds occupying the same country, though there is no reason why this should be where the masters of both packs are sportsmen and good fellows. The South Devon has been particularly fortunate in this respect for many years past, and the most cordial relations exist, and have for years existed, between the hunt and the two harrier packs, the Dart Vale and the Haldon, which share its country.

It is unfortunate that practically none of the large landowners in the hunt themselves follow hounds, though, as a body, they are well disposed towards

the sport. From the exigencies of the times, too, many shootings are let, and this constitutes a difficulty for the M.F.H. For, however well disposed shooting tenants may be, they cannot, from the nature of the case, have the influence of a resident landowner. They are also a fluctuating body, and uncertainty exists from season to season as to whom the master will have to treat with respecting the coverts. Some shooting tenants, too, know little of the amenities of country life and are dominated by their keepers. There have been, and still are, some excellent keepers in the hunt, trustworthy men who know their business and study their masters' interests, and at the same time do much to help the hunt. For all that, the master of hounds is more handicapped who has to deal with a servant than if he could go direct to the employer.

While on the subject of keepers, it is interesting to record that, a good many years ago, the question of the legal liability of the master at that time for "find-money" was actually raised and decided in the Exeter County Court. Circumstances, which need not be gone into beyond saying that they included no desire or attempt to evade an honourable obligation, decided the master to withhold for a time payment of certain keepers, who, thereupon, commenced legal proceedings to recover what they claimed as due to them in pursuance of a post card, sent to each one before the season commenced, stating that finds would be paid for at so much a fox. The keepers lost their case, the Court holding that, apart from the question of whether there was any promise to pay, the doing of his duty by a keeper in preserving foxes under his master's orders was not a legal consideration such as would support a

contract and convert any such promise into a binding agreement.

The farmers of South Devon are, almost without exception, first-rate fellows. They are large-hearted, hospitable and obliging, and also very independent, and expect, and rightly so, proper recognition and treatment from the hunt. We do not see as many of them in the field as we should like, and of those who do hunt a good number find the harriers, as being nearer home and entailing less sacrifice of time, more convenient than the foxhounds. Nevertheless, they are staunch friends to foxhunting, and a claim for compensation for damage to crops or fences is very rare. Poultry, of course, is paid for, and for this purpose a damage fund exists and is administered by two or three volunteers in different districts.

Where all are so good, it may seem invidious to name one individual, yet perhaps the fact of his being one of the oldest tenant farmers in the hunt justifies mention of the case of Mr. Daniel Ward-Wreford as typical of the excellent spirit that prevails. For thirteen years he farmed at Priestaford, Ashburton; for seven at Prestoncombe, Morleigh; and for the past twenty-six at Whiteley, Totnes. During all those years he has never made a claim for damage, even for loss of poultry, although the coverts on his farm have always been a sure find. Indeed, it is his proud boast that he would *rather lose a sheep than a fox or a hare.* For he has been a keen hare-hunter too, and Whiteley has been the popular fixture of the Dart Vale Harriers on their opening day during the whole of his long tenancy. On leaving Priestaford in 1881, he was presented by a few friends from Ashburton with a silver tea-set as a mark of their respect and esteem.

Now, in his eightieth year, he has given up business, and the members of the South Devon Hunt and Dart Vale Harrier Hunt have combined to offer him a testimonial in order to shew their appreciation of his sportsman-like spirit and of the sacrifices he has so long and so cheerfully made in the interest of hunting. Long may he live to enjoy his well-earned rest!

Of course, the hunt has had its difficulties from time to time. For the most part, these have been financial. Nowadays a subscription of £500 or £600 a year is as much as can be reckoned on, and of this some £200 or £250 is absorbed by the damage fund, kennel rent, keepers' dinner and incidental expenses. The hunt has been fortunate in always, since first it became a subscription pack, having had a master to make good the deficiency in the expense.

The reader will find very little in this history on the subject of the hunt finances. It seems sufficient to say that it has always been a difficult matter to make up the amount guaranteed to the master for the time being. In truth, it is somewhat sordid, this eternal struggle to make ends meet, and it is difficult to see what profit there can be in dwelling upon a topic so unpleasant. There can be no possible interest, for instance, in knowing what the deficit in the hunt accounts was, say, twenty years ago, or whether the sale of apples from the kennel orchard realized four pounds fifteen shillings last year as against four pounds ten shillings the year before. And, to my mind, few things are more painful than the shifts to which hunt secretaries and finance committees are forced to resort: "capping," special appeals, theatricals, entertainments, and the like. At the same time, in the words of the author of

the People's Budget, "The money must be got"; but the way of its getting is not an aspect of the Sport of Kings that needs to be perpetuated. Personally, I agree with the view of Mr. Reginald Herbert, of the Monmouthshire, that for a member of the field to separate himself furtively from his fellows, and go round with the hat, brings the thing down very nearly to the level of a German band. But I suppose that as long as there are people who are willing to enjoy their sport at the expense of others, these things must be done. Only, let us as soon as possible forget that they are done.

The climate of South Devon, being of the type dubbed "salubrious" by the house agents, sometimes brings hunting people from further north for reasons of health. Such always find, as indeed does any stranger or visitor from a neighbouring hunt, a cordial welcome from master and field. But for the most part, the fields consist of the ordinary inhabitants of the locality.

It is to the credit of the South Devon Hunt, that, during an existence of over a hundred years, there has been only one season when it was without a master, and that was the season of 1826–7 after the unexpected collapse of the Stover establishment under George Templer. It is true that at times certain parts of the country have been more or less derelict for a short period, but that was only due to the immense extent of the country and to the particular situation of the kennels at the moment. Of late years, any such outlying portions have wisely been either hunted separately or loaned to other packs, with the result, as James Pigg would say, of "keeping the tambourine a-rolling" throughout the wide dominions of the South Devon Hunt.

These divisions and temporary loans of country have occasioned some difficulty in deciding upon the arrangement of chapters which follow. The fact that more than one pack may have been operating at the same time in different parts of the hunt is an objection to the otherwise obvious arrangement of devoting a separate chapter to each master. Any other arrangement, however, was found on consideration to be open to still greater objections, so that, while conscious of its somewhat inartistic effect, I have decided to adopt, as far as possible, the one master, one chapter scheme.

One of the main objections to this scheme lies in the fact of its not fitting in with the periods into which the history is divided. This is due to the country, after division, having been reunited under a master (Dr. Gaye) who had presided for some years over one only of the two separate packs between which the country was for a time apportioned. Yet some division into periods was necessary on account of the break in the continuity of the mastership of the country as a whole and of the confusing changes in the names of the two packs under the dual arrangement. Despite this obvious drawback, the division into the three periods selected, viz. "The Original Country," "Partition" and "Reunion," appears to be less objectionable than any other. It should be noted that, in order to avoid complication and confusion, the country has been treated as partitioned only while the Haldon side was separately hunted as an entire and self-contained country; mere temporary loans of the Haldon or other portions to hunts which had also other country beyond the borders of the South Devon are treated as loans and not as a division of country and are dealt with under

the chapters devoted to the master in whose time such loans were made or renewed. The country now hunted by the Mid-Devon has also, for reasons which appear in Chapter XVIII, been treated on a distinct footing.

These very complexities constitute in a great measure the *raison d'être* of the history, the object of which has been to present to the reader, even at some sacrifice of symmetry and sequence, an accurate and clear statement of varying changes of name and scene. In this, the Chronological Table should be of material help.

I

THE ORIGINAL COUNTRY

GEORGE TEMPLER OF STOVER

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CHAPTER I

GEORGE TEMPLER OF STOVER: 18— to 1826

Early mention of hounds at Lindridge—Family history—Harris quoted—A Stover draft for Belvoir: Letter from Lord Robert Manners—Stamp of Stover hounds—Unpublished letter from "Jack Russell"—Nimrod quoted—Quicker style of hunting—Control over animals: a hunting monkey—General appreciation—A "memorable triumvirate": Templer, Taylor and Russell—His system of hunting bag-foxes—The "Let 'em-alones"—Sources from which the pack was drawn—Nimrod on the bag-fox—Templer's contemporaries—Hunting hares and coursing rabbits with a pack of foxes—Jack Russell on the subject—Financial difficulties—Verses on leaving Stover—Disposal of the pack—The Devon Foxhunting Club—His old horn.

"I sing of a party assembled at Stover
To hunt in the morning and feast when 'twas over."
(*A Party at Stover.* By Geo. Templer, 1823.)

TO the accomplished George Templer of Stover belongs the distinction of having been the master of the first regular pack of foxhounds that hunted the country which in later years came to be known as "The South Devon." It is known that hounds existed in the country before his day, for his uncle, the Reverend John Templer of Lindridge, kept a pack at that place, but a great-grandnephew of the latter, Captain J. G. E. Templer, the present owner of Lindridge, tells me he has always understood that the Lindridge hounds were harriers, though, he adds, they probably hunted "anything that jumped up." The Lindridge kennels were near the house, in what until quite recently was called the Kennel Pit, lately converted into a rock garden and christened "The Dell."

George Templer was the eldest son of James Templer, whose father, also James, built Stover House, some two miles from Newton Abbot. James was a lineal descendant of the Colonel Templer who was in the service of the Prince of Orange and took part in the memorable expedition of 1688 and also in the war of 1691. This Colonel Templer died, at Exeter, so poor that his son Thomas took to business in that city. Thomas had a large family, the youngest of whom, James, made a fortune and built Stover House.

George Templer was born in or about the year 1781 and was educated at Westminster. Mr. Davies speaks of him as a gentleman of brilliant intellect and most charming manner.[1] Poet and wit, scholar and sportsman as he was, there is every justification for the prefix accorded to him at the beginning of this chapter and usually associated with his name.

Listen to the words of a chronicler[2] who knew him well. He introduces him as "the favoured and favourite sportsman—everywhere and anywhere—the accomplished George Templer of Stover." He says :

"To enlarge upon his several excellencies, his amiability, the sincerity of his friendship and benevolence of disposition, adorned by a graceful erudition, and enlivened by a playful wit that made him the charm of society, is but to repeat an oft-told tale. . . . Those with whom he was wont to associate in jocund familiarity little judged that they were in contact with an intellect imbued with natural powers of the highest excellence. . . . Amongst sportsmen the name of Templer is as a household word, and never

[1] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.* By the Rev. E. W. L. Davies.
[2] Christopher Arthur Harris.

uttered without the sincere tribute of regret at his early departure from amongst them. . . . The epoch of George Templer of Stover, on many accounts and for many a long year will be the 'Alba nota' in the sporting annals of Devonshire; for there was a graceful individuality that belonged to the man, combined with unusual attainments, that would have made him remarkable at any time."[1]

It is difficult at this distance of time to ascertain with any certainty the date when Templer first hunted the country. It was certainly prior to 1810, in which year it is on record that the Duke of Rutland had a draft from the Stover kennels.[2] The fact that this was one of the only three occasions of the Belvoir purchasing drafts from other packs is eloquent testimony to Templer's judgment and to the superior type of hound that he bred. It also shews clearly that he must at that time have been keeping hounds for some years for his pack to have reached so high a standard.

In the Appendix to his interesting *History of the Belvoir Hunt* Mr. Dale mentions, after the entry for 1810, "Ten couple of hounds bought by Mr. Templer." This is a misprint for "bought *of*." The late Master of the Belvoir, Lord Robert Manners, very kindly confirms this in a letter in which he tells me, quoting from the *Journal of the Operations of the Belvoir Hounds* for the year 1810 by Shaw, the then huntsman, that Mr. Templer's draft consisted of entered hounds of from two to five seasons. Lord Robert adds:

"Under date August 16th Shaw writes: 'Mr. Templer's hounds arrived on Wednesday. They are all very lame from

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.* 1861. C. A. Harris.

[2] *Kings of the Hunting Field.* Thormanby.

having travelled so far in a day. I like their appearance. They are a good size, and quite the sort of the Belvoir Hounds.' October 10th. In his comment on a hard woodland day he writes: 'I do not dislike Your Grace's new hounds. I observed some of them come first with the scent and hunting in a very good style, vizt: Striver, Lasher, Margaret, Bluebell, Ranger, Pilgrim, Crier, Nestor, Guider, Chanter, Frantic, Ramper.' (All these were Mr. Templer's. R. M.)

"I may add that he had out 47 couple that day, including 19½ couple of young hounds and 9 couple of Mr. Templer's draft!"

After that, it is a little disappointing to find that eventually only 3½ couple were kept, the remainder being drafted as too high in the leg. But then, 'tis said, they have always been so "mighty particular" at Belvoir, that a hound is drafted even for scratching himself!

In connection with the draft sent to Belvoir, it is interesting to read[1] that the stamp of hound in the Stover kennel was an index of the taste and habits of the master. They were handsome, symmetrical with great roundness of loin, and with necks, heads and countenances "that would have satisfied Osbaldeston himself," and their condition added greatly to their appearance and, doubtless, also to their performance. There was always a strong Beaufort strain and Mr. Templer has expressed his admiration of the Badminton hounds in many of his poems.

The name of George Templer with the device *Templa quam dilecta* appeared over one of the stalls of a certain quaint temple of fame known as St. Hubert's Hall. This "Hall" consisted of an ancient stone quarry in the grounds at Hayne near Stow-

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*

C. A. HARRIS OF HAYNE

From a picture painted in Rome

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ford, formerly the seat of the Harris (now Mohun-Harris) family, shadowed and overhung by trees, and hollowed out and paved, with rustic stalls formed of blocks and slabs of Dartmoor granite arranged round the circular enclosure. Each of the twenty-three stalls was dedicated to a famous foxhunter of the day.[1]

The following extract from a hitherto unpublished letter, written in 1863 by the Reverend John Russell —"Jack Russell"—to Mr. Christopher Arthur Harris of Hayne, shews the high opinion the writer had of Templer as a sportsman.

"I *think* the Duke of Beaufort is the best sportsman I ever saw. I say 'I think,' because during poor, dear George Templer's lifetime I was not—could not be—so good a judge of the Noble Science &c. &c. &c. as I may be at this present writing. There would be, however, only two or three pounds between them, I fancy; the latter was the best man over a country, and, even in Devonshire, saw every turn hounds made. . . ."

Nimrod, too, makes honourable mention of the first master of the South Devon.

"The West of England," he writes, "produces two very good riders—Imprimis—the well known George Templer, one of the cleverest sportsmen of the age; and his friend, Mr. Henry Taylor, who officiated as whipper-in to him when I visited his country. He was a surprizing man, as the saying is, to get across that awkward country, Devonshire."

There was a tradition, when I was a boy, that on one occasion Templer rode his horse in cold blood over the toll gate of the Teignmouth and Shaldon Bridge, and that the formidable *chevaux-de-frise*

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*

arrangement with which the gate remained adorned until within the last half-dozen years was erected to deter imitators!

Not only was Templer the founder of the South Devon Hunt, but he was also the first in South Devon, as his great friend Lord Portsmouth, better known as the Honourable Newton Fellowes, was the first in North Devon, to introduce a quicker and more modern style of hunting than had previously been in vogue in the West.[1] At one time, Templer had charge of and hunted the Eggesford Pack for his friend.

Templer's was evidently one of those natures that have a peculiar sympathy with, and resultant control over, animals. Nimrod makes mention of a tame jackal as one of the features of the Stover establishment, and another feature was a monkey trained by Templer to follow hounds, properly turned out *en tenue rouge*, strapped on the back of an old hunter. Mr. Reginald Templer of Teignmouth, a nephew of George Templer, told me that he had often heard his father describe the performance, and how the poor monkey's career ended through his being killed by a blow from a swinging gate. Stranger still is the record of Templer hunting hare in Stover Park *with a pack of foxes*.[2]

It is little wonder, then, to find all authorities arriving at the same appreciation of his management in the field and his wonderful power over his hounds. Every inflexion of his voice, every note of his horn, we are told, was intelligible to them, and a wave of his hand was instantly and readily obeyed. It is said that the hunting powers of a pack were

[1] *Baily's Magazine*, Vol. 20 (Oct. 1873), p. 145.
[2] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*

never seen in greater perfection than with the Stover hounds under the guidance of the "memorable triumvirate"—Templer, Taylor and Russell. The two latter, nominally whippers-in, would on occasion encourage the hounds at a check to cast themselves in different directions: a "brilliant irregularity," as it has been called, that would be fatal in any but master hands.

But George Templer introduced something even more remarkable than a quicker style of hunting. The system, which is fully described by Nimrod[1] and Davies,[2] was unique in the history of foxhunting, although the principle underlying it had at that time already been adopted by the Royal Buckhounds.

It consisted in turning out before the hounds, when they failed to find the wild animal, a fox drawn from a reserve of a score or so, kept in two large yards at Stover, where each had his own kennel to which he was fastened by a long chain revolving on a swivel so as to ensure the animal getting plenty of exercise.

The fox to be hunted was turned down in view, some twenty yards in front of the pack, Templer standing among the hounds, watch in hand to ensure fair law being allowed. So great was his control over the hounds that not one would stir until he gave the signal. One hound, Guardsman by name, had become so knowing that he would keep his eye on the watch and dash away the moment the case closed with a snap.

The great object then, and also when hunting a wild fox, was to catch the fox alive, which was done by picking him up by his brush after he had been fairly run down. This naturally gave rise to very

[1] Nimrod's *Hunting Tours.* [2] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.*

hard riding on the part of Templer and his two friends Taylor and Russell, and also of certain members of the field who had become proficient in this unusual accomplishment. So successful were they, and such was the discipline of the pack, that it rarely happened that the fox was not saved unharmed and untouched by the hounds. One dark-coloured fox, christened the Bold Dragoon, was turned out thirty-six times before the season of 1824–5 and was then still on the active list. He nearly always gave a good run, and on his return home at night never went into his kennel without taking with him his supper consisting of half a rabbit and some kennel-meat without flesh, or, failing the rabbit, a small portion of flesh.

To hunt these bag-foxes Templer kept a separate pack, nicknamed the "Let-'em-alones," consisting of dwarf foxhounds[1] averaging nineteen inches at the shoulder. Notwithstanding the system in vogue, these hounds are stated[2] to have been capital hunters, very quick, and a very hard driving lot. What is remarkable, too, is that they could kill foxes when suffered to do so; and once while at North Molton during the Chumleigh week they killed three brace of foxes—wild moorland foxes—in four days.

These hounds were professedly foxhounds, inasmuch as they hunted nothing but fox; yet they

[1] I am aware that this pack has sometimes been described as "beagles" or "well-bred little beagles." Mr. Davies, however (*Life of Russell*) describes them as nineteen-inch foxhounds, and as he was a friend of Templer's, and was intimate with Russell and Taylor and others of their period, there is little doubt he is right. See also his mention at page 30 of their dispersal; the account in Appendix A of a run in 1823; the letter at page 27 from Jack Russell; and the reference on that page to Nimrod's *Hunting Tours*.

[2] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.* Nimrod's *Hunting Tours.* Both these works contain a full description of the system.

THE REV. J. RUSSELL

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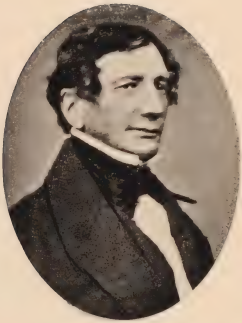

THE REV. H. TAYLOR

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were not all pure foxhounds, for it would have been impossible, without travelling to all the kennels in England, to get them all pure-bred foxhounds, having regard to Templer's standard size, viz. not exceeding nineteen inches.[1] This is confirmed in an unpublished letter from Jack Russell to his friend Christopher Arthur Harris, in which he says he believes Templer did not breed one of his "Let-'em-alones"; that many came from his uncle's kennel at Lindridge, many from King (who at that time kept harriers); that all Templer's friends, J. P. Gilbert and John Bulteel among the number, who possessed "Lilliputians," contributed to keep up his pack; and that Mr. Yeatman (the Reverend Harry Farr Yeatman, who at that time hunted hare, fox or roe-deer in what is now Blackmore Vale country), also sent him many.

From some of these hounds, too, was bred the pack known in 1850 as The Forest Harriers, which hunted Skerraton Down, Dean Moors, Hanger Down and the Forest of Dartmoor. These Harriers were the property of Mr. Servington-Savery, who was a Deputy Ranger of the Forest.[2]

Nimrod, who went on a visit to Stover and hunted with Templer on the 27th September, 1824, makes some interesting observations on the hunting of the bag-fox.

"Some thoroughbred foxhunters," he writes, "may say there is too much of *the bag* about Mr. Templer's hunting. This we must all admit; but in such a country as Devonshire, exceptions to rules and customs may be allowed; and to insure sport by any means is the grand object. If a covert prove

[1] Nimrod, *op. cit.*

[2] *Fores's Guide to the Hounds of England.* 1850. By Gêlert (The Rev. E. W. L. Davies).

blank in many countries, it is nearly as good as a middling chase to trot away for two or three miles, over hedge and ditch and try another; but to be trotting up and down the Devonshires lanes for half the day would be anything but agreeable. . . . Mr. Templer rides hard, and had six very clever horses for his own riding, four of which he bred by Czar Peter and Colossus, horses in Mr. Fellowes' stud."

Of Templer's comrades of the chase, of the Bulteels, of Jack Russell, of Paul Ourry Treby, of Salusbury Trelawny, of Harris of Hayne, of gallant Tom Phillips and others, much of interest will be found in the works of authorities enumerated at the beginning of this book. Some of them are also mentioned in the account of a run in 1823 given in the Appendix.[1]

Mention has been made of the hunting of hares in Stover Park with a pack of foxes. Another unusual procedure, the coursing of rabbits with foxes and terriers, is thus described in a letter, hitherto unpublished, of Jack Russell, written in 1863 to his friend C. A. Harris. He says:

"Templer had three or four—certainly three—foxes to which, with his terriers, he used to shoot (and course) rabbits and hares too, I suppose, when he found them—but the coursing was performed in this way: A keeper was sent to ferret and take alive as many rabbits as he could. These were brought in a bag to the door of the house, when the party within were summoned to see the fun. The keeper carried the bag containing the rabbits some two or three hundred yards away, the foxes and terriers were brought out, and a rabbit 'enlarged,' and off went the lot after it. As soon as the rabbit was caught and taken from them, they all rushed back to the bag, waiting for another course. But if a fox was first up it was a difficult matter to catch

[1] Appendix A.

him, as he always started to bury his prey. The foxes never *turned* the rabbit they caught, but invariably ran up to and seized him; but if a terrier was first up, the contrary was the case, the rabbit always turned before the dog seized him."

At last Templer's generosity and unbounded hospitality, combined with unfortunate speculation which included the granite tramway (many parts of which are still extant) constructed from Heytor to the Stover Canal, so crippled the handsome fortune with which he started in life, that he was compelled to sell Stover and to give up his hounds. Rightly or wrongly, he attributed his failure to the dishonesty of a certain lawyer whom he anathematizes in unmeasured terms in a well-known poem of his, "The Attorney." As one can forgive the bitterness which prompted that caustic satire, so also can one sympathize with the desolation of the man's spirit in his ride to Exeter on taking final leave of his home, as revealed in his hitherto unpublished poem: *On looking back from Haldon for the last time on Stover:*

"Stover, farewell! Still fancy's hand shall trace
Thy pleasures past in all their former grace;
And I will wear and cherish, though we part,
The dear remembrance ever at my heart.
. . . . .

"Not as the hare whom hounds and horn pursue
In timid constancy I cling to you;
But, like the bolder chase, resolved, I fly,
That where I may not live I will not die."

Stover was purchased by the then Duke of Somerset, and in February, 1826, Templer parted with his hounds. The big pack went to the Reverend Harry Farr Yeatman of Stock House, Dorsetshire; the

smaller hounds, including the far-famed "Let-'em-alones," were scattered among different buyers, including Sir Henry Carew, Mr. Hammett Drake, Mr. Worth of Worth, and Mr. Hole of Georgeham. Many were afterwards followed up and got together by the Reverend J. Russell and Mr. Arthur Harris of Hayne to help in forming the pack with which they shewed such extraordinary sport over the Tetcott and Pencarrow countries in 1828–30.[1]

Templer then went abroad.

> "And, now, Remorse! with thee prepared to go,
> These scenes I leave for wider fields of woe,
> On foreign shores unheeded tears to shed
> For bygone bliss and brighter moments fled."[2]

Upon his return, a year or so later, he set about building that beautiful house, Sandford Orleigh, commanding the full stretch of the tidal portion of the River Teign on one side, and facing the tors of Dartmoor on the other.

It was apparently in Templer's day that the Devon Foxhunting Club was founded, under the auspices of which different packs assembled at Chumleigh in North Devon several times in a season to hunt between them for a week or ten days consecutively. These "Chumleigh Meetings" brought together all the best Devon sportsmen of the day and were festive and jovial gatherings. It was at one of them, when Newton Fellowes was in the chair, that Templer recited his *Farewell to my old Horn*, which is given at the beginning of this volume.

Such was the affection in which Templer was held, that we are told that when he had finished

[1] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.*

[2] *On looking back from Haldon for the last time on Stover.*

STOVER IN 1773

From an engraving in the possession of Major St. Maur

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his "Farewell," there was not a dry eye among all the company of stalwart sportsmen there assembled.

The original old horn is now in the possession of Captain J. G. E. Templer of Lindridge, to whom it passed on the death, only some two years ago, of George Templer's last surviving daughter. As will be seen from the frontispiece, it was of the old bugle pattern which, with the curved or crescent-shaped horn, had in most places been supplanted by the straight horn before the year 1826. It seems to have taken about half a century to complete the change, for, while the old pattern was used by Templer up to 1826, the straight horn was known to Beckford, whose allusion[1] to it appears to imply that it was not an entire novelty at the time he wrote (1781). Indeed, the process of evolution towards the present straight type may have taken even longer, unless Blaine[2] was very far behind the times. Speaking of the desirability of a huntsman being good on the horn, he says: "We do not mean the straight horn of Mr. Beckford, but the true fox-hunting bugle . . ." and the passage is illustrated by a woodcut representing a curved or crescent-shaped horn suspended from a cord or baldrick.[3]

Mr. Templer married a daughter of Sir John Kennaway, Bart., of Escot, Devon. Mr. Reginald Templer told me that his death was the result of an injury in the hunting-field. He was taken first to the hospital at Newton Abbot, or to the building that then did duty as such, and thence to Sandford

[1] *Thoughts on Hunting*, Letter VI. And see Daniel's *Rural Sports*, 1801–2.

[2] *Encyclopædia of Rural Sports*. 1840.

[3] An excellent article on *Hunting-horns Ancient and Modern* from the well-known pen of Mr. H. A. Bryden appeared in the *Field* of 11th October, 1913.

Orleigh, where he died shortly after, in December, 1843, at the age of sixty-two.

He is buried in the family vault under the little church at Teigngrace, within a gunshot of Stover Park, the scene of his former glories and the home he had loved so well.

Riding past the spot recently on my way back from hunting, the inspiration came to me to visit the tomb of this great sportsman. The church is full of tablets to the memory of departed Templers, but the caretaker knew at once which I wanted. "You mean the Squire—Squire Templer, Sir," and he pointed out the simple tablet recording George Templer's open-handed charity to the poor, and shewed me where his body lies under the church, adding: "He was a great sportsman, wasn't he, Sir?"

Is it fanciful to hope that the spirit of the departed sportsman-poet was not insensible to the presence of his visitor, probably the first for the past seventy years to approach his resting-place in the scarlet uniform of the chase?

> "Thou art gone,—all lowly laid,
> Gentle may thy portion be,
> And as thou hast done and said,
> Be it even unto thee.
> Fare thee well,—the shadows fall,
> Tree and turret bear the pall,
> Veiling the empurpled wall
> Of the solitary hall."[1]

[1] Stover. From an "In Memoriam" verse at the end of *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*

JOHN KING OF FOWLESCOMBE

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CHAPTER II

JOHN KING OF FOWLESCOMBE: 1827–9

A misconception—Its origin—Mr. Reginald Templer's explanation—Harris's description of master and pack—"Mr. King's Hounds"—Country hunted—Fixtures—Sir Walter Carew's hunting journal—Record of sport—Hunting from Chumleigh—Additional fixtures—Visit of Bulteel's Hounds—Probable inauguration of the Ivybridge week—A long draw—Some hunting men of that day—Mr. Pode of Slade—King takes the Hambledon—A serious accident—Founder of the Hambledon Hunt Club—The *New Sporting Magazine*—King of Fowlescombe identical with King of Corhampton—Story of a mallard—The South Devon Harriers—Death in the saddle on Dartmoor.

"When all have great merit 'twould be hard to begin,
If precedence belonged not of course to a King;
In royalty's person you seldom will find,
A good fellow and sportsman together combined;
One exception there is, for of sportsmen the best,
And a hearty good soul, is John King of the West."
(*A Party at Stover.*)

AFTER the break up of the Stover establishment in 1826, the country appears to have been without hounds, so far as a regular pack is concerned, for a season. In 1827, Mr. John King of Fowlescombe re-established the pack. I have not been able to ascertain where King kennelled his hounds. He came originally from Fowlescombe, and at one time lived at Holne, as is shewn by the following lines:

"Then slowly o'er the heath and fern
In deep content the hunters turn;
But King, at Holne, would bid them stay
To cheer them on their homeward way."[1]

[1] *Dartmoor Days.*

I have also seen it stated that at one time he lived at Spitchwick. But one has only to glance through the list of his fixtures[1] to see that from no one of the three places named could he have hunted the country he did. My own impression, derived from the fact that Sir Walter Carew's diary, presently referred to, covers the whole of King's mastership, is that the pack was then kennelled at Haccombe. This, however, is purely conjecture.

It has repeatedly been stated in print that Sir Walter Carew was George Templer's immediate successor in the mastership. The assertion probably had its origin in a footnote to Templer's *Farewell to My Old Horn*, which states that the following verse was—as no doubt it was in fact—an allusion to Sir Walter Carew :

> "I, too, the fading wreath resign,
> For friends and fame are fleeting,
> Around his bolder brow to twine
> Where younger blood is beating."

But, whatever its origin, the statement is not correct, inasmuch as King's two seasons' mastership intervened between those of Templer and Carew. This we know for certain from Sir Walter Carew's own hunting journal, where he tells us that "Mr. King kept the hounds the first two seasons (1827–8 and 1828–9) contained in this list; I took the country and commenced hunting it in 1829."

Quite accidentally I stumbled on what I think is the explanation of Templer's allusion to Sir Walter as his successor. In recent conversation, the late Reginald Templer, a nephew of George Templer, mentioned casually that the *Farewell* was written

[1] See p. 36.

after George Templer's return from abroad, when Sir Walter was just about to take on the hounds from King. That (and poetical licence in ignoring the intervening master) would reconcile the allusion with the facts. I am also inclined to suspect, from the fact that Sir Walter did not come of age until 1828 and that his journal covers the whole of King's two seasons, that the last-named was to some extent acting as a warming-pan for his successor. We get an idea of the master and of his pack from the following :

"The late Mr. John King of Fowlescombe was an able sportsman. His hounds were rather lighter than those which meet with most consideration at the present time (1861), yet neatly proportioned and not deficient in power, and withal most true and efficient hunters. He maintained the principle that hounds should account for their fox with as little assistance as possible, and work out their own success. Naturally shrewd and observing, as dwellers and frequenters of the moor usually are, he was fully cognisant of the nature and habits of the wild animal he pursued, and when he did render assistance to his favourites it was invariably to the purpose, and followed by happy results."[1]

The pack went by the name of "Mr. King's Hounds,"[2] and we can gather the extent of country hunted from the entries in Sir Walter Carew's hunting journal,[3] which, as already stated, includes the period of King's mastership. Here is a list of his fixtures during the season 1827–8 :

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*

[2] See Hunting Appointments in Trewman's *Exeter Flying Post* of the period.

[3] See next chapter, p. 46.

" Aurora " Wood (later " Rora ")
" Sir Thomas Acland's " (Killerton)
Bagtor
Bellamarsh
Berry
Bovey
Bovey Potteries
Bradley
Canon Teign
Castle Dyke
The Castle, Haldon (presumably the Belvidere)
Chudleigh Bridge
Cotley Wood
Dartington
Duckaller
Haccombe
Haldon Race Stand
Haytor Rock
Holne Chase
Ilsom (Ilsham, Torquay)
Ilsington
Luscombe
Mamhead
New Inn
Nitton Heathfield (now Knighton H.)
Ogwell
Park House, Bovey
Pear Tree
Sands
Stoke Cliffs (Stokeinteignhead)
Stover
Skerraton
Tor Bryan
Whiteway
Yarner Wood

Naturally, the country actually hunted extended in several directions beyond these points, which shew only the actual fixtures. For instance, when the pack met at Cotley on the 14th September and had a capital run to Great Fulford, we are not told where they found, which might have been further north even than Cotley Wood. On the 18th September, after they had met at Dartington and killed a fox, another was found at Luscombe, now in the Dartmoor country. Again, on the 3rd May, 1828, when the fixture was Haytor Rock, they found " near Widdicombe."

Sir Walter Carew's journal for this season (1827–8) shews that good runs were by no means infrequent. In some cases the locality of the finish is indicated, shewing that good points were made, as on the 4th

February, 1828, "Found at Whiteway, killed at Powderham," or, again, Friday, February 22nd, "At Chudleigh Bridge; a bagman; killed at Bagtor; capital run." I shall have something to say as to this particular breed of bagmen in the next chapter. Again: "Wednesday, 12th March. At Duckaller," near Starcross; "a good run to Dunsford," though in this case we are not told where they found. Then, "Tuesday, April 1st. A bagman at Stover; ran to Lustleigh; earthed." Finally, "Monday, 12th May. At Yarner Wood: found on the Down; ran through Lustleigh to the covers behind Bovey; earthed."

King began cubhunting on the 29th August, 1827, and hunted right through the season to the end of May, the last day being on the 26th of that month, during which period he put in seventy-six hunting days. Eleven and a half brace of foxes including three bagmen were killed, and there were eighteen blank days. During each of the months of October, November and December, the pack hunted two days from Chumleigh in North Devon.

In King's second season (1828–9) we find the following additional fixtures: Longwood, Gudrington, Buckland Beacon, Hennock, Oxton, Kingscarsewell and Sir Stafford Northcote's (Pynes). These places of meeting do not indicate any extension of the country previously hunted, unless an exception be made in the case of the last on the list, at which, however, hounds met on only one day, as was the case with regard to the Killerton fixture in the previous season. It would seem, however, to shew that both Killerton and Pynes were within the country hunted by Mr. King.

In those hospitable days an interchange of visits

between neighbouring hunts was popular. Thus in 1828 we find Mr. Bulteel's (now the Dartmoor) meeting on the 5th and 7th November at Bellamarsh and Duckaller respectively, on the latter occasion scoring a run over Haldon to Chudleigh, characterized in the journal as a "very slow" one. In return, Mr. King's hounds met at Ivybridge and Slade on the 26th and 28th of the same month. This was probably the beginning of the Ivybridge Week, which has been kept up to the present day.

This season does not appear to have been a remarkable one for sport in general. The following are the only entries that seem worth transcribing from the journal. It will be seen that in all these cases a good point was made and a kill scored. Other good runs are mentioned but no details given.

"Nov. 17th, 1828. At Haccombe. Earthed; dug him out. 22nd. Turned out the Haccombe fox on the Heathfield; caught him in a stable at Teignmouth; beautiful run."

"Saturday, 7th March. At Aurora Wood. Capital run to Holne Chace; killed."

"Sat. 21st March. At Yarner Wood. Found on the Common; beautiful run to Holne Chace; killed."

The last entry for the season is April 27th, when they met at Buckland Beacon and apparently *drew the whole way to Stover* before finding.

The record of killed for the season is twenty-one foxes, of which six were bagmen. Out of seventy-five hunting days nine were blank.

Mr. J. H. Ley of Trehill has in his possession some doggerel rhymes, dated 1828, which shew that the following were among the regular followers of Mr. King's hounds on Haldon. Sir W. Carew; Mr. Hole of Parke; Mr. Kitson of Shiphay; Mr. W.

Ley of Woodlands, Clerk to the House of Commons; Mr. H. Ley, Rector of Kenn; Mr. Short of Bickham; Mr. Stowey of Kenbury; Mr. Burlton of Exminster; Mr. Eales of Easton; Mr. Makepeace; Mr. St. Leger, grandfather of the present Lord Doneraile, and Mr. Quenton.

When Mr. Pode of Slade gave up hunting, his country—virtually the Dartmoor country of to-day—was taken over by King and Bulteel. We are told that this was "somewhere about the year 1828,"[1] and that the partnership was merely temporary, Bulteel succeeding to the country and taking the hounds of Mr. Pode. The real date would doubtless have been 1829, after King gave up the South Devon country. In that year he migrated to Hampshire, and was master of the Hambledon Hounds from 1829 to 1841.[2] He appears to have been a great success in that country and to have shewn excellent sport, notwithstanding a serious accident that befell him in 1832, when his horse fell on him, which interfered a good deal with his riding for some time afterwards. He was the founder of the Hambledon Hunt Club.[3] Honourable mention of him in prose and verse appeared from time to time in the *New Sporting Magazine* of the period.

I learn from Miss Turner, Hon. Secretary of the Hambledon Hunt, that, while in Hampshire, King lived at Corhampton, a village close to Droxford. This explains the fact of his being sometimes spoken of as "of Corhampton." But to us in the West he remained to the end John King of Fowlescombe. When he gave up the Hambledon on account

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire*, p. 46.
[2] Baily's *Hunting Directory*.
[3] Fores's *Guide*, p. 36.

of ill health, he placed in the hands of his successor, Mr. Long, fifty-five couple of as fine bitches as ever entered a covert.[1]

The following incident gives a note of King's character. A friend of Jack Russell's, in the presence of Lord Henry Bentinck, told how King, when master of the Hambledon, once saw a hunted fox dash into a flock of ducks and seize and carry off a mallard which was subsequently picked up by King when the fox was run into. Lord Henry ventured to doubt the truth of the story, and had for answer: "I had the pleasure of knowing Mr. King intimately, and he was a man quite as unlikely to tell an untruth as your lordship."[2]

He was not the only hunting member of his family, for his nephew Thomas King at one time kept a pack known as the South Devon Harriers, hunting the parishes of North Huish, Diptford and Marley.[3]

John King died in the saddle while out with Mr. Trelawny's hounds on Dartmoor in 1841.[4]

[1] Fores's *Guide* for 1850.
[2] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.*
[3] Fores's *Guide* for 1850.
[4] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell.*

SIR WALTER PALK CAREW, BART.

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CHAPTER III

SIR WALTER PALK CAREW, BART.: 1829–43

Popularity—A contemporary appreciation—Kennels at Haccombe and Marley—Sir Henry Seale at Haccombe: quotations from his unpublished letters—Limits of country—Hunts some of present Dartmoor country—His keeper warns off the Dartmoor—Courtenay Bulteel unmoved—"The Devon Hounds": a private pack—Hunting journal—John Beal: contemporary tributes—Bag-foxes—The box-trap—Wild and healthy bagmen—A six hours' hunt—A magnificent run—Country hunted—The Ivybridge Meeting—Lines of country—Cliff foxes—The Teign crossed: above Shaldon Bridge; at Netherton; at the Pleasure House—Tide too high to follow—A great run: Rora to Langamarsh—Hydrophobia—Some harrier packs—A tragedy—Hunt dinner—Curious case of a vixen—Visits to Eggesford—Sport in North Devon—Jack Russell's Hounds at Haccombe—Resignation—An all-round sportsman—A Carew and a Champernowne.

"Carew's rich scream so loud and shrill
Startles the blackcock on the hill;
It vibrates on the fox's ear,
And every hound has caught the cheer;
It gathers up the scattered pack,
And claps them on his very back."
(*Dartmoor Days*. By E. W. L. Davies.)

BORN in 1807, and succeeding his father in the Baronetcy in 1830, Sir Walter Carew, as already mentioned,[1] succeeded Mr. King as master in 1829. To his wise and steady administration during fourteen years, we, of a later generation, are largely indebted for the sporting instinct of the farmers of South Devon, which he did so much to foster and develop and which endures to this day. In this he was, no doubt, helped by the advantages of his

[1] See p. 34.

position and large landed interests; but these, of themselves, will not go far, especially in Devonshire, without a personality that commends itself to the country-side. This Sir Walter Carew possessed, and in addition he was a sportsman of the highest order. Mr. Harris[1] attributes the rescue of the sport from extinction at a critical period to the exertions and support, under every difficulty, of Mr. Trelawny, Sir Walter Carew and Sir Henry Seale. He also places Sir Walter as second only in successfully crossing a country to the gallant Tom Phillips in these words:

"Perhaps the next best to him—yes, certainly, the next best in singleness of purpose and determination in taking a line, was Walter Carew, the present baronet."

And to him was allotted one of the stalls in St. Hubert's Hall before mentioned[2] with the motto *Animo non astutiâ.* Flask, by Smuggler, and Arlington were two of his best hunters.

Sir Walter had two seats, namely, Haccombe, on the south side of the lower reaches of the River Teign, some three miles from Newton Abbot; and Marley, near Brent. He had kennels at both places, but the pack was usually quartered at Haccombe, the kennels at Marley being used on the occasion of temporary visits to that side of the country.

Sir Walter Carew greatly distinguished himself in the hunting fields of Warwickshire and Leicestershire, where he hunted after giving up his own pack in South Devon. Even before this, he used to pay visits to the Shires, and during one whole season,

[1] *Letters on the past and present Foxhounds of Devonshire.*
[2] See p. 22.

1842–3, that he spent at Baggrave Hall, Leicestershire, his friend, Sir Henry Seale, went to stay at Haccombe and took command of the pack in his absence. The letters of Sir Henry Seale, or Mr. Seale as he then was (for his father was still living), to the absent master are interesting and will be quoted from time to time in these pages. In them we read how the field on the Haldon side "must begin to think your hounds can kill their foxes; Luxmore was grumbling because the fixture for Monday is Bradleigh; they want us on the other side of Haldon every day. . . . Old Short is the best; I find he has a little consideration for the hounds"; how "we have killed a fox for every day as yet, as you will see by the kennel door" (that was up to Christmas); how, of a "most brilliant burst" from Powderham to Haldon House with a kill in the open, "Bulteel says he had not seen anything like it for years. Lord Devon was delighted"; how, speaking of another run, "you would have enjoyed this run; it lasted about thirty-five minutes at a racing pace. It must be a very good fox to do more before your hounds over the open in the condition they are in at present"; how, "I caught one vixen by the brush among the rocks and held her up, but while I was trying to put my whip into her mouth she gave a spring and got away." His many remarks on individual hounds shew him to have been a careful observer and an enthusiast, as: "I wish Manager in shape and make was like Brilliant, so that you could like him; he did work to-day in style."

Again, in sending Sir Walter particulars of the proposed draft: "The hounds are all so good that we have had great difficulty in deciding which are the ones that may go if you approve. . . . We put

in Gravity, because Beal says you cannot bear the sight of her, but before you part with her you had better see her work. She is one of the best in the kennel and more steady than you could possibly expect." From these observations it is clear that Sir Walter had a good eye for a hound and nice ideas of make and shape.

The letters contain some amusing references to domestic troubles. "What shall I say to the housemaid here?" Sir Henry asks in one letter, "I think she wants a little of Mrs. Martin's controul. She does just what she likes, not much, and frequently absents herself without saying a word to Mrs. Seale. Goes to balls, etc., and knocks up the nurses at 5 o'clock in the morning to let her in at the window; pretty rapid; . . . Shall I give this young lady to understand that she is under my controul?" Later, "I find the housemaid does not improve. She walked off Friday and did not return until Saturday afternoon. . . . I think we had better look out for another for you." The incident closes with the remark "I have dealt out the law to the gay housemaid."

When Sir Walter first took over the country, its limits were not clearly defined. Necessity for a strict demarcation of boundaries had not then arisen. It did arise later, and Sir Walter's daughters, the Misses Carew, have in their possession correspondence between their father and Mr. John Crocker Bulteel on the subject. Unfortunately the letters cannot at present be found, so we do not know what arrangement was arrived at. We shall see, however, that Sir Walter continued to the end to hunt the Marley country, including Skerraton, Harbourneford, etc., and we know that at some subsequent period a "rectification of the frontier"

took place, by virtue of which those parts are now in the lawful possession of the Dartmoor Hunt.

In this connection the following passage from a letter of Sir Henry Seale dated the 9th January, 1843, written to the master at Baggrave Hall is interesting:

"Your Marley keeper, Hanning,[1] came over here (Haccombe) last Wednesday and desired me to mention, when I wrote, that Bulteel's hounds had been drawing Brent Hill. He told me that you had given him orders to forbid their doing so, but they would draw the covert, and Mr. Bulteel (I suppose he meant Courtenay) said: 'Never mind, it's all right.'

"They found, it seems, first in your wood by Brent and the fox ran by the windows at Marley as before, and soon wished them good morning. They then came back and would draw your new plantation. Hanning says if they are allowed to disturb it he cannot expect to have a litter there. He wishes to know if you have given them leave to draw there?"

It is during the early days of Sir Walter Carew's mastership that we first find a record of the pack having another name than that of its owner. In the table of hunts contained in the *New Sporting Magazine* for 1831 the pack is called "The Devon," though this title drops out again in 1834. There is no doubt that, whatever their formal style may have been, the hounds were popularly known as "Sir Walter Carew's." The Misses Carew confirm me in this, and I myself, in days gone by, have heard folk speak of "Sir Walter's" hounds, but never of "The Devon." At any rate, the pack was the private property of the master and was hunted at his sole expense.

[1] The man's name was Anning; it must be inferred from the above spelling that he pronounced it with an aspirate.

Sir Walter's hunting journal is a remarkable little volume. No larger than an ordinary hound list (and, indeed, smaller than some hound lists), it measures only three and a quarter inches by four and a quarter, and is a quarter of an inch in thickness. Each of its pages contains from twenty-six to twenty-eight closely written lines in a very small and clear handwriting. It was originally started as an account of the game killed at Haccombe and begins with the 1st September, 1823, two years before its author left Eton. The earlier entries include, under the heading "Hunting," the following interesting items: "24th Sep., 1825, 3 hares and a fox"; "Feb. 14th, 1826, 1 hare, 1 fox"; and "Mch. 29th, 1826, 1 fox." And in the summary for the shooting season ending February, 1829, "by the harriers — hares."

These entries at first sight might lead one to conclude that the harriers trespassed on the domain of the foxhounds. But the Stover establishment had been broken up by February, 1826, which leaves only one fox accounted for by the harriers for the three preceding years covered by the journal. This does not point to the hunting of foxes being a general practice with the harriers before the foxhounds were disestablished. The harriers in question were no doubt those of Sir Walter's father, Sir Henry Carew, who kept a pack at Haccombe,[1] which was recruited by a purchase of some of George Templer's hounds.[2] It was, no doubt, with his father's harriers that Sir Walter acquired the rudiments of his knowledge of hunting that stood him in such good stead later on.

[1] See the reference to Sir Henry Carew's Harriers in the account of "A Devon Hunt of 1823" in Appendix A.

[2] See p. 22.

JOHN BEAL AND THE PACK

From an oil painting at Haccombe

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The journal develops into a hunting journal proper (with an occasional intervening summary of game killed to the gun) in the year 1827. The first two seasons deal with John King's mastership and have already been referred to.

The entries in the journal are very concise, often laconic. They were evidently entered in a batch periodically from notes made after each day's sport, probably weekly, since in one case we find the entry : "I have mislaid the account for the week beginning Dec. 5th." The journal bears evidence of scrupulous exactness.

John Beal was huntsman. He remained with Sir Walter all the time he kept the pack and accompanied the hounds when they went into the Tiverton country after Sir Walter retired. Sir Henry Seale's letters shew that Beal was a good huntsman and rarely away from his hounds when running. He was also a trustworthy servant. "I have appointed Beal," Sir Henry wrote in December, 1842, "president and toastmaster to preside over some roast beef and two bowls of punch to drink all our good healths Xmas Day, and Kitson is to say grace, with old Rendal (I mean the one who is partial to tobacco) to say 'Amen.'" "Beal" he says in another letter "has 'hopes in view'" (a favourite expression of the old huntsman's) "of a good day's sport to-morrow."

Of Beal as a huntsman, Colonel Anstruther Thomson, writing of the Tiverton hounds in the year 1845, says :

"John Beal was the huntsman; he had no whipper-in. The hounds were taken to the meet in couples, for one day they met (*sic*), a dead horse and stopped and ate him up. John Beal was a real

workman in a rough way. Once, after hunting a fox a long time, they ran into a gorse covert. Old John got off his horse and said: 'Mr. Hole, do 'ee hold my horse until I pawk un up again.' He strode into the covert, blew his horn, and soon had the fox afoot again."[1]

The Reverend E. W. L. Davies also makes mention of Beal in connection with the Tiverton. He says:[2]

"He is a good man in a woodland country, and, though somewhat of a veteran"—this was in the year 1850—"is a rattling, energetic huntsman, keeping his hounds together without the aid of a whipper-in."

Beal was somewhat of a character, as shewn by his remark to Mr. R. H. Watson[3] after one of the annual spring Ivybridge Hunt weeks: "Dartmoor hunting is butiful—if you could but see it; them bogs be always in the way." But, then, he was accustomed to the eastern quarter, which we of the South Devon always claim to be the best of Dartmoor!

After his retirement, Beal went to live at Shaldon, not far from Haccombe, and died there in a house, facing the bridge, which still bears the name he gave it of "Hunter's Lodge."

Of Sir Walter's keenness to begin, we may judge by the date of his first cubhunting fixture, 27th July. From that date he hunted steadily on until the 28th May, 1830, putting in eighty-seven days, making a solid ten months' season! His greatest number of hunting days in one season, however,

[1] *Eighty years' Reminiscences.* J. Anstruther Thomson.
[2] Fores's *Guide* for 1850.
[3] See p. 83.

was in 1831–2, when he hunted on ninety-three days between the 8th August and the 3rd May.

A word of explanation is needed as to the practice that prevailed in those days of hunting bag-foxes. Let not the latter-day purist turn up his eyes in horror at the word until he hears the explanation. There was as much difference between the openly turned-down fox of those days and the secretly shaken-out bagman of later times as there is now between the wild Hector of Dartmoor and the hand-reared, wired-in tame fox that alone is available in some would-be smart hunts. For Carew's turned-down foxes were far more worthy of being hunted and were capable of shewing infinitely better sport than the hand-reared domestic variety referred to. Foxes were thin on the ground in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and the fact that they had to travel far afield for food and company kept them in good condition and taught them an extensive range of country. The system adopted by George Templer, of regularly keeping a number in confinement and saving them alive, was not followed. Instead, the practice was to dig a fox that the pack had marked to ground, and then, two or three days afterwards, to turn him down to be hunted. During those intervening days he was kept in a large building affording room for exercise, and well fed, but not surfeited. As a result, he started in good condition and fit to run for his life, which, with the knowledge of country in his favour, he often managed to save. From this fact, and from the time, pace and distance of the runs afforded, it is clear that he must have been allowed sufficient law. Sometimes, as happens with a fox found in the usual way, he would get killed early and fail to shew a run. But it is notice-

able that some of the best runs recorded in the journal were in pursuit of the turned-down animal. When digging was not possible, a box trap was sometimes used, which caught the fox uninjured, as shewn by the following entry that occurs in the journal: "Set the box trap and got him." Times have changed, and the system would not be tolerated at the present day. But in passing opinion upon it, one has to consider the circumstance of the times and the manner of its working. Without such a thorough sportsman as Sir Walter Carew at the head of affairs, it would probably not have been a success at any time.

He himself, it will be noted, drew a nice distinction between the unhandled animal and the other, for in his summary of each season's sport he gives the number killed as "so many foxes and so many bagmen."

Here are some examples taken from Sir Walter Carew's journal of fast bursts and of long runs which shew that these bagmen were in reality wild and healthy foxes, well equipped for the struggle they had to undergo and not to be classed with the totally different animal that has rightly brought the name of bagman into such disrepute among sportsmen.

On the 17th September, 1829, a fox, dug out at Stover on the 12th, was turned out at Lindridge and stood before the pack for forty fast minutes before being killed.

On the 23rd December, 1830, a fox, also dug out at Stover a few days previously, was turned out at Lindridge, and, after running through Ugbrooke Park, took the pack straight to Canonteign where he was killed.

Time was evidently given to a fox to recover when

dug out after a run of any length or severity. One dug out on the 28th January, 1831, after a "very pretty run" to the Ilsham cliffs, was allowed to rest until the 4th February, when he was turned out at Bovey Heathfield and killed at Haccombe after a very good run, evidently on his way home to the cliffs.

Another good bagman that knew the stronghold in the Stoke cliffs was the one put down at Bradley on the 9th February, 1831. The pack hunted him with a very bad scent for six hours through seven parishes, finally losing him in the cliffs. All credit to the patience of hounds and huntsman!

A fox found near Chudleigh on February 11th, 1833, earthed in Chudleigh Rock and afterwards caught in a box trap, was evidently a visitor in that locality. For, when set at large at Stover a few days later, he gave "a beautiful run" through Bradley, the Decoy, Kingskerswell, Compton and Cockington to Paignton sands, where he was taken alive.

On December 19th, 1835, a fox from Brownscombe was turned out at Teignbridge. The pack ran hard till dark and the master could not say whether or no they killed.

Another, turned out at Ogwell, was killed at Botter Rock after a capital run.

A fox turned down at Humber Moor on the 23rd December, 1837, went straight back to the drain at Whiteway from which he had been taken on the 21st.

A rare good bagman was that which, on the 31st March, 1838, got to ground at Buckland Beacon after starting from Jew's Bridge. The master speaks of this as "a magnificent run."

Of the same good stuff was the Decoy fox put down

at the Sands. He took the pack through Lindridge across the River Teign at Netherton Point and saved his brush in the rocks above Abbotskerswell. This was on the last day of the year 1839.

On the 22nd November, 1841, a Stover fox turned down at Sandy Gate was killed in Teignmouth after a very good run. No doubt he was making for the cliffs.

On the 31st December, 1842, a turned-out fox ran over Little Haldon to the Parson and Clerk cliff and was killed. And on the 5th of January, 1843, another, after taking a big ring through Harcombe, Ugbrooke, by Ideford to Colly Lane, was killed at the Warren, Starcross. And yet another was killed in Teignmouth on the 6th February in the same year after a run from Sandy Gate.

The above instances and others to be found in the journal sufficiently prove the stoutness and condition of the turned-out fox ; and the number that escaped (I have recorded chiefly those killed) is evidence that they were given fair play and a good start.

The country hunted by Sir Walter was much the same as that covered by his predecessor, John King. It embraced a wide range and included fixtures as far apart as Dartmouth, Killerton, Pynes, Whitestone Wood, Great Fulford and Skerraton. Some others, further west, such as Ivybridge, are mentioned only in connection with the Ivybridge meeting and were doubtless " by invitation," but Erme Bridge appears to have been one of his own fixtures.

It is interesting to note certain lines of country, frequent in those days, but which are rarely taken by hounds to-day. The cliffs on the seashore on either side of the mouth of the Teign were much resorted to by foxes. Probably, though in a less degree, this is

A DOG HOUND

A BITCH HOUND

From oil paintings at Haccombe

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true of later times, but hunting has receded further from the coast and these cliff foxes are not often found. I once saw a run finish at the Parson and Clerk cliff, and on occasion have known foxes make for the cliffs between the Ness and Torquay. On one of those occasions, in Mr. Whidborne's second mastership, a hound fell over the cliffs and was killed. It is remarkable, considering that he hunted the cliffs frequently, that Sir Walter Carew mentions only two similar accidents in his fourteen years' record. Both occurred in December, 1831 ; the first at the rocks at Sowden cliff, when the master lost his favourite bitch, Gipsey, and the second at Watcombe, when a hound called Alderman was killed after earthing his fox. Sir Henry Seale, however, mentions two or three instances in his letters of hounds falling over the cliff, though in every case the hounds were not seriously hurt. Once a man had to be let down by a rope to recover one, which "the field seemed to consider great fun."

Instances are also to be found in the journal of the pack frequently crossing the River Teign between Ugbrooke and Stover, and sometimes much lower down in the tidal reaches of the river. And yet I can recall only two instances within the last thirty-five years of the river being crossed between Teignbridge and Bovey, and none at all of any crossing below Teignbridge. And of those two instances, one, in Dr. Gaye's time, I think, was, as I learnt years afterwards from one of the keepers concerned, *after a dead fox*. The other occurred while Dan North was huntsman to the Haldon Hounds, and the pack earthed a fox in Rora.

Why this change should have come about it is hard to say. The river was always there. The canal was

there in Carew's time. The branch railway line from Newton Abbot to Moretonhampstead is the only new barrier. But it has been there since the 'sixties; and foxes in other countries cross the line continually. The explanation may be that no necessity exists for foxes to cross this particular line, as they have a wide tract of country on either side of it unimpeded by any other railway. A similar reason may account for foxes no longer crossing, as they were wont to do, the wide navigable portion of the Teign lower down, where the main line of the Great Western Railway runs parallel and close to the river between Teignmouth and Newton Abbot. Old Mr. Arthur Owen, who was intimately associated with the Teignmouth and Shaldon Bridge Company, and who died in 1901, told me that he once saw Sir Walter's hounds cross the river, at low tide, a very short distance above the bridge. Twice only is anything of the sort specifically mentioned in the journal. Once on the 31st December, 1839, when they ran a bagman, as already mentioned,[1] "through Lyndridge across the river at Netherton Point and earthed in the rocks above Abbotskerswell"; and once with a fox from Well cover "over Humber Moor to the river at the Pleasure House.[2] Fox crossed, but the tide *was too high for us to follow*." From the matter-of-fact way in which the crossing is referred to in these two cases, and from the brevity of many of the entries, we may fairly conclude the occurrence was not unusual. And from the concluding words of the last-quoted entry, it is clear the field did not hesitate to ford the river

[1] See p. 52.

[2] The Pleasure House was an octagonal building belonging to Mr. Comyns of Wood, on the North Bank of the River Teign at a spot nearly opposite Netherton Point. The ruins of this have disappeared during quite recent years.

when the tide permitted. Doubtless the channel had not then been dredged to its present depth. Even so, one cannot help thinking how thankful one would have been to find the tide too high for the adventure.

On the other hand, the line taken was on many occasions just such as we should expect a fox to choose to-day. This applies in particular to the Haldon country.

So far as one can judge, out of many good runs one of the best and longest was that from Rora Wood on the 12th January, 1843, the line being by Bickington to Bagtor and the granite works at Heytor, over the moor to Buckland, through the woods there, across the Dart and to ground at Whitewood and Langamarsh. Sir Henry Seale, who was then in command, speaks of this as an extraordinary run.

Naturally we find, interwoven with much excellent and sometimes brilliant sport, days and periods of failure and disappointment; records of fog, bad scent, no sport, impossible weather and blank days, as on the day when all the country from Skerraton to Stover was drawn without finding! The difficulties of earth-stopping are also apparent throughout the journal, but we find only one instance mentioned of a three-legged fox being killed.

In the summer of 1838, Sir Walter Carew suffered the greatest misfortune that can befall a master of hounds, for hydrophobia broke out in the kennels, with the result that he was not able to hunt the dog-hounds before November. From this statement it looks as if the whole pack was not attacked.

In the season 1831–2, the master started hunting dogs and bitches separately and sometimes hunted as many as three and four days a week.

In those days, packs of harriers were numerous in

Devonshire, and Sir Walter occasionally came across them when engaged in the "bolder chase." Near Haccombe, he ran into Sellick's harriers in 1832. In November, 1834, mention is made of "Mr. Bovey's hounds," which earthed a fox that was subsequently turned out before Sir Walter's apparently in the neighbourhood of Bovey Tracey. In the course of the run, Mr. Bovey, who had come on purpose to see his fox turned out, was thrown from his horse and killed on the spot. This Mr. Bovey was a brother of the "Bob Bovey," of Pear Tree, who, with Jack Russell, got into such hot water at Tiverton School for keeping a cry of hounds on the quiet.

During the same season, Sir Walter's hounds ran into Mr. Rodd's harriers in the country round Cotley Wood.

In April, 1837, they ran a fox from Skerraton Wood to Kingswood, where they joined forces with Bulteel's hounds, and the two packs afterwards proceeded to draw Raythorn Brake together, finding a fox and earthing him at Wood Ball. In December of the same year, Carew's, after throwing off at Chudleigh Bridge, met, and apparently joined forces with, Bennet's hounds which were running a fox.

In 1835 mention is made in the journal of the hunt dinner at Chudleigh, which looks as if that function was then an annual affair.

Under date 25th February, 1843, a curious case is given of a vixen. This fox was taken out of a drain at Haccombe about 9 a.m., but, being a vixen, she was earmarked and put back. She was found and killed some six miles off, at Torbryan, the same morning by the pack which met at eleven o'clock at Bradley.

Sir Walter Carew was on terms of close friendship

with all the sportsmen of front rank in his day. Especially intimate was he with the Hon. Newton Fellowes (afterwards the fourth Earl of Portsmouth), and frequent were the visits he paid with his pack to Eggesford to take part in the Chumleigh meetings.[1] Great sport sometimes fell to his lot in North Devon. For instance, meeting at Rackenford on February 18th, 1832, the last day of that particular meeting, which had begun on the 28th January, Sir Walter describes how at the end of a good run the fox was viewed not a hundred yards before the hounds.

"And," he says, "they most decidedly killed, but, it being nearly dark, and every person being done but Hole, Beal and myself, we could not live with hounds or find any part of the fox. Every horse in the field beat to a standstill. A large field at meeting." He then remarks: "This was the best week's sport I ever witnessed, three of the runs being perfect."

One cannot help thinking this must have been the occasion referred to by Charles Trelawny[2] when

"With Russell and Carew's hounds, in twelve consecutive hunting days, the *shortest* runs were twelve miles from point to point as the crow flies."

On another occasion in North Devon, in January, 1835, Sir Walter speaks of finding "the old Collaton fox which had beaten Russell three times. Had a good run and lost."

It was from Eggesford, too, that occurred on the 6th December, 1839, what Sir Walter describes as one of the finest runs he ever saw. Here is his note of the day:

"At Lapford Forches. Found directly; killed. Found again in the Lapford covers. Went away to Lee, nearly to Thelbridge Cross, by the Black Dog

[1] See *ante*, p. 30.

[2] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell*, p. 240.

to Kennerley Wood, 1 hr. and 10 min. without a check. Here he was coursed and we hunted him back to Lapford where nothing saved his life but 2 or 3 fresh foxes. This was one of the finest runs I ever saw, up to Kennerley being perfect."

Expeditions were also made from time to time into the Tiverton country, where the pack was kennelled at Collipriest by the master's cousin, Mr. Tom Carew; and into Mr. Bulteel's (the Dartmoor), chiefly in the month of November. In connection with the latter, it is interesting to note that the Ivybridge Week was firmly established before 1837, for in November of that year it is spoken of as "*The* Ivybridge Meeting."

Jack Russell brought his hounds to Haccombe in October, 1831, and had two days, at Powderham and Haccombe respectively.

At the end of the season 1842–3, Sir Walter gave up the country and lent his pack, with the exception of eight couple of bitches, to his cousin, who was then hunting the Tiverton country. The eight couple he presented to the Quorn, from which fact, and from the fact of their distinguishing themselves in that country, we may conclude that his hounds were bred with care and from the best blood.

In addition to his qualifications as a master of hounds Sir Walter was a good shot, a yachtsman and a devotee of the road. Besides getting a great deal of driving practice at the "real thing," he kept his own coach and continued to drive a team until late in life. In a notice of his death, which occurred at Marley on the 27th January, 1874, a writer in *Land and Water* says that he developed into one of the best whips in the West, and that, in the days when the "Telegraph" and the "Quicksilver" were synonymous for speed and safety, Sir Walter was well known on the

Western roads ; and many a steady lesson had he at the hands of the brothers Ward, who used to drive in the county of Devon. Henry Ward spoke of him as one of the best pupils he ever had.

Sir Walter was buried in the family vault at the little church close to Haccombe House.

The door of this church still bears the remains of four ancient horseshoes nailed there as a token of thanksgiving by a Carew, who, long years ago, wagered with a Champernowne of Dartington as to which of them should swim his horse furthest out to sea. The Carew won the wager and had considerable difficulty in saving his own life and that of his friend.

CHAPTER IV

CAPTAIN MARTIN E. HAWORTH: 1843-45

Family connections—The Devon Harriers and their doings: Sir Henry Seale's opinion—The Devon Hounds—Kennels near Powderham—Guest at Eggesford—A run through twelve parishes—Anstruther Thomson's criticism: a critic at fault—Where a hard-and-fast rule fails—Inconvenient position of kennels—A notable hunting diary—Chief fixtures of that day—The master's keenness—Good sport—Bag-foxes given up—"Shaking a fox"—A notable run—Fox in otter's holt—Scent in snow—A point from Stover to Holne Bridge—Other memorable runs—A master's troubles: was wire among them?—Some of his field—Takes the H.H.—Lady Mary Leslie's story of "The Barber"—An active terrier—*The Silver Greyhound* and *Road Scrapings*—Tom Clark whipper-in to the Devon—Becomes huntsman to the Craven, Old Berkshire and Badminton—The Duke's opinion.

> "Slight token, be it leaf or flower,
> Will mark for life one blissful hour;
> . . . . .
> So trophies of the chase recall
> The men, the hounds, the steeds and all."
>
> (*Dartmoor Days.*)

HUNTING men in South Devon were fortunate in securing an immediate successor to Sir Walter Carew in the person of Captain Haworth.

After resigning his commission in the 60th Rifles, Captain Haworth went to live at Southtown House, Kenton, and was factor to the Powderham estate, his wife, Lady Mary Haworth, being a cousin to the then Earl of Devon. In 1886 Lady Mary Haworth became Countess of Rothes in her own right, and Captain Haworth then assumed by royal licence the surname of Leslie, the family name being now Haworth Leslie. His eldest son married a daughter of Mr. Henry

CAPTAIN MARTIN E. HAWORTH

From a water-colour sketch by his Sister

"THE BARBER"

From an oil painting in the possession of Lady Mary Leslie

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Studdy of Waddeton Court, near Brixham, from whose coverts the South Devon Hounds have had many a good run.

From 1840 to 1843, Haworth had been hunting from Powderham a pack of harriers known as the Devon Harriers. It was of these harriers that Sir Henry Seale, in January, 1843, wrote from Haccombe[1] to Sir Walter Carew in the following terms :

" I have now to tell you of the Devon Harriers and their acts, which have caused a grand sensation among your field. There are various reports. The truth is, I believe, that Mr. Haworth drew Eastdon covert near Mr. Eales's house, and found a mangey, weak fox, which the hounds killed at Oxton."

It was the old story of the foxhounds having a larger country than they could properly contend with, and Lord Devon had written only a fortnight or so previously, asking whether it was the intention to draw his coverts. He also wrote to the acting M.F.H. immediately after the " mishap " to express his regret at the occurrence.

The incident caused a considerable stir at the time, but was not repeated, and the troubled waters were soon quieted by the tact and good temper displayed by Sir Walter Carew and his deputy.

When the country became vacant in 1843, Haworth took it over and substituted for the harriers a pack of foxhounds. These hounds were called " The Devon Hounds," a name which, as we have seen,[2] was the formal title of the pack hunting this country as far back as 1831.

His whipper-in was Tom Clark, and his kennel lad Charley Pike. The kennels, Mr. J. Gould Drew tells

[1] Sir Henry was at that time in charge of Sir Walter's hounds. See p. 43.
[2] See p. 45.

me, were in what is known as Kenn Lane, the road leading from the main road near Powderham Arch to the village of Kenn.

Colonel Anstruther Thomson mentions[1] Haworth being at Eggesford as the guest of the Hon. Newton Fellowes for the Chumleigh Hunt week in 1845, and as one of six or seven who were in at the death of a fox that, on the same occasion, Jack Russell's hounds hunted through twelve parishes, the run lasting from twelve o'clock until five. But in a previous page,[2] while admitting Haworth's keenness, the same author speaks rather slightingly of his abilities as a huntsman. He says Haworth was "not much of a huntsman. He would sit on the top of a hill and view holloa though his hounds were a mile away." With the deepest respect for so great an authority, it seems to me the reason given does not warrant the condemnation. None will dispute the correctness of the general rule, insisted upon in Anstruther Thomson's *Hints to Huntsmen*, that a huntsman should go to fetch his hounds rather than holloa or blow for them to come to him. But this general rule, like other general rules, has its exceptions, as, for example, where a huntsman cannot get to his hounds, or when to go there and back would involve undue delay. In Devonshire, such circumstances frequently arise. It may often happen there that, if hounds are half a mile away, a huntsman may have to go a mile to get to them. In such a case, the saving of time, and, perhaps, of a half-blown horse, not only justifies, but demands, a departure from the rule. This shews the fallacy of attempting to apply an inflexible rule to conditions which are never constant. Colonel Thomson's writings shew that he attached undue

[1] *Eighty Years' Reminiscences*, p. 108. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

importance to the rule in question; or perhaps I should say that, having hunted mostly in rideable countries, he did not appreciate the modifications that an unrideable one may necessitate. Moreover, Colonel Thomson could not, at the time he made the note in his diary, have seen much of Captain Haworth, as he did not come to Devonshire until towards the end of the latter's last season. He did not then even know him well enough to spell his name correctly!

That there could not have been much to find fault with in Haworth's methods as a huntsman is proved by the record of excellent sport shewn by him and by the number of foxes accounted for in a notoriously difficult country in which to kill a fox. And this, with the disadvantages, in his first season, of a pack newly got together, and an abnormally dry and hot cub-hunting season.

A note of each day's sport was entered in the master's diary, which is illustrated with some clever pen-and-ink sketches. Its length—it comprises some twelve thousand words—precludes its reproduction here, but a careful perusal of its pages reveals the difficulties the master had to contend with and his success in overcoming them.

The following were the chief fixtures in Haworth's time:

Bellamarsh.
Black Forest.
Bovey.
Bradley.
Bridford.
Chudleigh Bridge.
Cotleigh Wood.
Culver House.
Dunchideock.
Dunsford Bridge.
Eastdon, Starcross.
Forde House.
Haccombe.
Haldon.
Haldon Race Stand.
Kenn.

Kennford.
Killerton Lodge.
Kingskerswell.
Lindridge.
Luscombe.
Mamhead.
Ogwell.
Oxton.
Parke House, Bovey.
Peamore.
Powderham Saw Mills.
Round O.
Sandy Gate.
Shiphay.
Stover Gate.
Thorns.
Whiteway.
Windy Cross.
Winslade House.

It will be seen that long distances had to be covered to reach some of these fixtures. The distances home were in many cases still longer. But the Captain was as keen as mustard. This is shewn by the first entry in his diary, which records his covering, in company with his hounds, the fourteen miles from the kennels to Bridford by 5.30 a.m.; and it is easy to see from the rest of the entries that there was no abatement in his energies throughout his term of office.

Although an occasional blank day is recorded, the country was evidently well stocked with foxes on the whole, a circumstance which no doubt led to the abandonment of the practice of hunting bag-foxes. For, though a few such instances occurred in his first season, when the master mentions that he "shook a fox," the old system was not kept up once the need for it had ceased.

Several excellent runs occurred in Haworth's first season, and also many very hard days creditable alike to hounds and huntsman. The master even had the satisfaction of shewing in his first season what may be classed as a record run, namely, on the 1st February, 1844, the fixture being Lindridge. After forty minutes to ground in the morning, a fox

"CAPTAIN ROCK"

SOME OF CAPTAIN HAWORTH'S HOUNDS

From oil paintings in the possession of Lady Mary Leslie

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was found in Humber Moor, and, after taking a turn over Haldon and round to Lindridge, he took the pack, by way of the Decoy, Kingskerswell, Abbotskerswell and Whiddon, to within two miles of Totnes, where they killed. The time is given as two hours and ten minutes. Those honourably mentioned in a newspaper report of this gallant chase, as riding the run throughout, besides the master and his whip,[1] Tom Clark, were Messrs. Short, Luxmoore, Kitson, Barnes, Friend, Jones, Walkey, Taylor, Wreford and Marriott.

Another very severe run in a rough country, with a big point, is chronicled as having taken place on the 13th March, 1844, with a distance estimated at fifteen miles between the extreme points. After meeting at Sandy Gate, the pack hit the line of a moved fox in Torr Hill Brakes near Lindridge, and were fortunate enough to get on good terms with him. The line taken was through Well Bottom, the Sands, Ugbrooke Park, Chudleigh, Whiteway and Ashton, crossing the Teign there; then a big loop by Canonteign, re-crossing the river at Bridford, and away for Cotleigh Wood, within a few fields of which the hounds ran into their fox. Time, two hours and five minutes.

The entry in the master's diary for the 14th December, 1843, records that "in consequence of the sudden and lamented death of George Templer" the hounds did not keep their appointment at Whiteway on that day, a graceful tribute to so good and accomplished a sportsman.

Very graphic is the description of a run from

[1] Some eminent authorities, including the late Duke of Beaufort, have taken exception to this colloquial use of the word "whip." See, however, article on "Hunting Terminology" in the *Field* of 9th November, 1912, p. 962.

Stover a week later. The pack had killed a fox after hunting him for an hour and a half, and the field, by some mistake, had all gone home, thinking the master had left off drawing. But he had not ; and he found another fox. " Away I went," he says, " with an old fox, at half-past two, in a thick fog, on the shortest day in the year. Nobody but Tom and I, and our heads turned towards Dartmoor. I must confess that, as it grew darker and the pace increased, I began to fear I should lose the hounds on the moor. We had a splendid fifty minutes, and, as good fortune would have it, he turned his head (being afraid of the fog) back to Stover and we stopped the hounds, it being dark. We arrived at the kennel at half-past nine o'cl."

For the benefit of those interested in the problem of scent, Haworth makes the observation, under date 21st February, 1844, that there was a rare scent while the snow was falling fast, and adds that he has known a burning scent when snow is disappearing but never when it is coming down. Doubtless, as his experience ripened, he came to learn that a good scent in falling snow is no phenomenon. Another note in his diary on the subject of scent tells how, on the 10th March following, the pack killed an old dog fox on a day that the master characterized as the wildest and most boisterous he ever saw in this country.

Haworth began his second season (1844–5) very strong in hounds—thirty-eight couple of working hounds—and he hunted three days a week. But the cubhunting season was again very hot and dry, not a single drop of rain falling until just before the opening day which was on the 10th October. After that, scent continued very bad indeed until December, with a few exceptional days, such as the 28th Novem-

ber, when they had a good run from Bradley to Heytor. Then the frost set in and interfered a good deal with sport. This season was characterized by bad weather; violent storms, torrents of rain and boisterous days occurring with great frequency.

On Boxing Day a notable run took place from the Large Plantation at Stover (query: the Wilderness). They ran by Ash Hill to Halsanger tin mine and Bagtor Wood, thence nearly to Widdicombe and on to Buckland Beacon, through Buckland Wood and Holne Chase, over the Dart and nearly to Holne village, where the fox turned, and he was eventually run into in the open near Holne Bridge.

After this there was a succession of good runs ending with blood. The season, however, taken as a whole, was a bad scenting one, and frost and snow set in again at the end of January, when the diary ends abruptly.

From the diary we learn that the coverts drawn from Killerton included Cutton Allows and Stoke Woods. It is interesting, too, to read that a fox found near the house at Oxton, at that time the residence of Mr. H. Swete, a staunch friend to hunting, "immediately went into the otter earths."

The diary also gives an insight into some of the difficulties that interfered with sport in those days, and we find they are much the same as prevail to-day. Sometimes it is a little difficulty about So-and-so's coverts; sometimes the members of the field are to blame; sometimes careless or neglected earth-stopping. Once a hound was caught in a vermin trap and bled to death. Bad weather and bad scent were common then, as now, and mange was not unknown. Wire is not mentioned, but it seems to be referred to (of course not the barbed variety) where

we are told that for want of a gate no horse could follow the hounds across Mamhead Park. There is a very old wire fence there now, which may well have been then newly put up to protect the belt of plantation on the Oxton side of the park when first planted. The lichen-covered posts and rusty wire harmonize so well with the surrounding bracken and trees, as to be practically invisible in certain lights. I once galloped unconsciously slap into it; so, on separate occasions, did Mr. Godfrey Lee and another friend of mine.

Among the members of the field of those days appear the names of Lord Cranstoun, Mr. Wall of Bradley, Mr. W. E. S. Clack and Mr. Kitson; and the master's reference to the first flight includes Mr. Short, Mr. H. Swete, Mr. T. Lane and Mr. Luxmoore.

On leaving Devonshire in 1845, Haworth took over the mastership of the Hampshire Hounds, better known as the H.H.[1] He built new kennels at Ropley, but was obliged, much to the regret of the country, to retire in 1847, owing to the subscriptions falling off in consequence of the famine. When he left Devon, he took a part of his pack with him into Hampshire, and, as some of these hounds doubtless figure in the picture of part of his Hampshire pack, I have thought it worth while to reproduce it. At any rate it gives an idea of the type of hound of that day.

This picture, as also the pictures of two of his horses, Captain Rock and The Barber, are in the possession of Captain Haworth's daughter, Lady Mary Leslie, who tells a quaint story of The Barber. It seems that on their long journeys home after hunting, master and man would sometimes stop for

[1] Baily's *Hunting Directory* gives his dates as master of the H.H. as 1844 to 1847. It should be 1845 to 1847.

hurried refreshment at the door of some inn. On those occasions, whoever was riding The Barber was obliged to dismount, for the horse would never stand still and allow his rider to drink in comfort. One day, Captain Haworth said to Clark : " The Barber will never allow one to have a drink. See whether he will have one himself." A pewter pot of suitable size was accordingly offered to the horse, which drank the ale with avidity. After that, it was found that, once he had had his quart, he was quite amenable to his rider following suit.

The picture of Captain Rock was painted just outside the eastern corner of Powderham Park, and shews in the background a glimpse of the estuary of the Exe, with Powderham Church on the left. The hounds appear to be some of the Devon Harriers. The quaint little terrier in the foreground was a great favourite of his master's, and, when the latter was mounted, the terrier would make a stepping-stone of his foot to spring on to the saddle.

The portrait of Captain Haworth is from a little water-colour sketch made by his sister and is said to be an excellent likeness.

Lady Mary Leslie also has her father's horn. It is of copper, rather shorter and with less bell than most of the horns of that period, though not as short or as straight as the generality of modern horns. Its tone struck me as particularly sweet, even in a London flat !

After giving up the H.H., Haworth became a Queen's Messenger. He has many an interesting anecdote and many a thrilling adventure to relate in his book *The Silver Greyhound*, so called after the badge of office peculiar to the Service. He also wrote another book : *Road Scrapings*, which, besides shew-

ing his knowledge of all the details of the fascinating sport of coaching, gives a delightful glimpse of life on the road.

Haworth's whipper-in, Tom Clark, afterwards became huntsman to the Craven, under Mr. Villebois, and, later, for five years to the Old Berkshire, under Mr. Morrell. Then, when the famous Tubney pack was broken up and the eighth Duke of Beaufort bought eight couple for four hundred guineas, Clark went with them to Badminton and remained as huntsman to the Duke for ten years, often hunting hounds six days a week. He had the character of being too keen upon blood. I confess I never knew a huntsman who was otherwise; it is the business of the M.F.H. to restrain this bloodthirstiness within due limits. Of Clark the Duke of Beaufort said: "Clark was a first-rate man in the kennel and good in the field. But he was, perhaps, a trifle too anxious to get away for a gallop. Nor was he very thorough in drawing his coverts, and not seldom drew over his fox. He was proverbially a bad finder of foxes. Once in the open, he was, however, in his element; he loved to shew his field a gallop, and could be with his hounds when they ran."[1] Further mention of Clark is made in the Hunting Volume of the Badminton Library.

Clark retired in 1868 and took an inn at Chipping Sodbury.

[1] *The Eighth Duke of Beaufort and the Badminton Hunt*, by T. F. Dale.

THOMAS V. LANE

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CHAPTER V

THOMAS VEALE LANE: 1845–49

Kennels at Oaklands, Chudleigh—His own huntsman—Churchward whipper-in—Marquis of Waterford in South Devon: finds his match in Tom Lane—Horses—Steeplechases in those days: "Vingt-et-un"—"For the Honour of Devon"—Personal recollections—Name "Devon Foxhounds" retained—First mention of "South Devon": Herbert Byng Hall; *Forest's Guide*—"Gêlert": the country "one of the worst in England"—Sir Henry Seale's Hounds—Name "South Devon" borrowed by another pack—Extracts from Woolmer's *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*: "Notes of Sport"; hunt dinner—Sir Henry Hoare—Lane's talent for painting—Hound list.

> "Light-hearted Tom! whose kindly tongue
> With happy joke is ever hung;
> Than he no hunter tops a fence
> With stronger nerve or less pretence;
> And none who join him e'er complain
> Of dullness in a Devon *lane*."
>
> (*Dartmoor Days.*)

CAPTAIN HAWORTH was succeeded in the mastership by Mr. Lane, who built kennels at the farm, now called Oaklands, which he had taken near Chudleigh. He acted as his own huntsman and had for whip Churchward, who, later, in Mr. Whidborne's first mastership became huntsman to the pack.

Mr. Lane had the reputation of being an excellent huntsman, very quick and quiet. He was also a light-weight and a hard rider. When the famine stopped hunting in Ireland for a time, the celebrated Lord Waterford brought some of his crack hunters down to South Devon, with the idea that he would shew the natives how to ride over their own country.

He was an undeniably good man, but found more than his match in Tom Lane, whom he could never beat. The latter had some good horses, and, among them, two in particular which he bought in the rough and made himself. They turned out excellent performers, and his friend, Captain Haworth, offered what, in those days, was considered a fancy price for the two. But Lane would not part, and on one of them, called Vingt-et-un, he won several steeplechases in days when steeplechasing was far different from the artificial sport it is to-day. At that time not a fence was trimmed, not a bank made up, the course being a natural one. Tom Lane's old friend Sir Walter Carew also lent him one or two of his best hunters with an injunction to ride his best "for the honour of Devon."

Besides being a hard rider, Mr. Lane was a fine horseman. He was getting on in years when I saw him in the hunting field in the early 'eighties, some thirty or more years after he had given up the hounds. But his figure was as neat and as spare as that of a young man; he sat his horse with an easy firmness that betokened the finished horseman; and he had beautiful hands.

That the pack officially retained the name "The Devon Foxhounds" throughout Lane's mastership is clear from the hound list for his last season, 1848–9, which will be found at the end of this chapter, and this is confirmed, if confirmation is necessary, by the statement of his daughters, Mrs. Rudge and Mrs. Rawes, who assure me that he never changed that title. Nevertheless, it would seem to be during Mr. Lane's tenure of office that the pack first came to be known or spoken of, popularly at any rate, as the "South Devon." This is shewn by

the following passage from a book published in the year 1849.[1] After treating of the Eggesford hounds, the author says :

" The South Devon hounds come next in succession, that is as regards their country, inasmuch as we by no means presume to give our opinions . . . which are or are not the best and which the worst. . . . But as regards the South Devon hounds, they are a mixed pack, consisting of twenty-five couple, averaging from twenty-one to twenty-two inches in height, kept by subscription, and hunted, from all accounts, admirably by Thomas V. Lane, Esqre.; the kennels are at Chudleigh which is about the centre of the country, which extends sixteen miles or thereabouts on all sides ; they hunt twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays."

A few pages later, the same writer, speaking of Mr. Trelawny's country, says :

" The South Devon Railway divides the country lengthways, from Plymouth to Totnes by Ivy Bridge ; Totnes is in Sir Henry Seale's country, and is in easy reach of the Devon Hounds. . . ."

The fact of the writer applying to the pack its former as well as its present name—Devon as well as South Devon—is a pretty clear indication that the transition from one to the other was then taking effect.

Fores's Guide to the Foxhounds and Staghounds of England (Gêlert), dated 1850 but which bears internal evidence of having been compiled in anticipation of the season 1849–50, also speaks of the pack as the South Devon :

" Sir Henry (Seale) will now hunt a large portion of the late South Devon country, resigned by Mr. Lane."

[1] *Exmoor : or, the Footsteps of St. Hubert in the West* (Herbert Byng Hall).

There can be no question, then, that the title "South Devon" dates from the time of Tom Lane. Its origin may have been due to a desire to distinguish the pack from the "North Devon" which then existed.

In "Gêlert's" *Guide*[1] *to the Foxhounds and Staghounds of England*, for 1849 (compiled and published in 1848) the favourite fixtures of the Devon Hounds are given as: The Round O.; Oxton; Ogwell; Sandy Gate; Haccombe; Furzeley. The only comment is the following: "Mr. Lane is unfortunate in his country, it being, without doubt, one of the worst in England"!

While on the subject of the name of the pack, it may not be amiss to mention here that when, as will be seen in the next chapter, Sir Henry Seale hunted the country, the pack went by his name, "Sir Henry Seale's Hounds." In consequence of this, the name "South Devon" appears to have been then assumed for one or two seasons by a pack, formerly known as "Mr. Morgan's Hounds,"[2] hunting a district which now forms part of the Lamerton country.[3]

It is unfortunate that no record of the sport shewn by Lane appears to have been preserved. So far as is known, he kept no hunting journal, and the references to the pack in the local press are of the most meagre description. The following are the only notes I have been able to trace, and it is evident that in those days people were not given to "writing up" their particular pack, for the editor of Woolmer's *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, from which these are

[1] This guide was in the hands of the public in 1848. It is identical with *Fores's Guide*, but does not appear to have been published by Messrs. Fores until the following season.

[2] *Fores's Guide* for 1850, p. 19.

[3] *The Foxhunter's Guide for* 1850–1 (Cecil), pp. 57 and 189.

taken, made an appeal to sportsmen about that time to send him some accounts of runs.

Woolmer's *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, Feb. 6, 1847.

"Thursday 28.—The Devon Hounds at the New Inn.—We have just heard, on going to press,* that these hounds had a good run, and killed their fox, at Ingsden—weather gradually improving.

"The Devon Hounds met on Thursday last week, at the New Inn. Found a fox near Bovey Heathfield, ran him through the Stover Covers towards Bradley, where he was headed; back again through Stover, and away to Ingsden Warren, where the gallant hounds ran into him: a very good hunting run—weather improving. . . .

"BEAL-NAM-BO."

* Unfortunately the above Report did not reach us till Saturday morning, and that was after we had gone to press; but the "Week's Epitome" of Sport is too well told to be lost.—EDIT.

Woolmer's *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, March 13, 1847.

FOXHUNTING IN THE WEST.

"Thursday.—The Devon Hounds met at Goodstone Gate; found instantly in Goodstone Plantation, going away at a good pace to Sigford, running through Bagtor Wood on to Bagtor Plantation, over the Moor, leaving Rippingtor to the left, on to Haytor Down to Haytor Rock, thence over that fine part of the Widdicombe Moors to Bun Hill and Honey Bank, when it was thought he went to ground. The dinner on this day, at the Golden Lion, Ashburton, was attended by a very large party of sportsmen, Sir Bourchier Wrey, Bart., in the chair, when the toasts of 'Success to Foxhunting,' 'Long life to the Chairman' and 'Preservers of Foxes in this county,' were responded to with many a hearty cheer."

Mr. Lane gave up the pack at the end of the season 1848–9. His eye for a horse appears to have descended to his grandson, Sir Henry Hoare, Bart., who is often to be seen judging in the show ring.

Mr. Lane was a clever painter in oils. Among other pictures of his are two copies of the original painting at Haccombe of Sir Walter Carew's Hounds with his huntsman Beal. One of these is in the possession of his daughter, Mrs. Rudge at Stede Court, Harrietsham. Mr. Whidborne had the other, which on Miss Whidborne's death passed to the Watts family.

Here is a copy of the list of Lane's Hounds before referred to. I have corrected a few printer's errors in spelling which occur in the original.

LIST

OF THE DEVON FOX HOUNDS,

September 1st, 1848.

AGE.	NAME.	SIRE.	DAM.
7 Years	Nectar	Sir A. Chichester's	Sir W. Carew's Niobe
	Halcyon	Crawley Valiant	Their Hostess
6 Years	Triumph	Crawley Tyrant	Their Streamlet
	Abelard	Mr. Russell's Ardent	His Legacy
	Flamer	Sir W. Carew's Brusher	Mr. Brand's Fair Maid
	Henbane	Mr. Bulteel's Neptune	Sir W. Carew's Hebe
	Pastime	Crawley Valentine	Their Prudence
5 Years	Ganymede	Crawley Gallant	Their Volatile
	Gondola		
	Dowager	Crawley Dandy	Their Hostess
	Dairy Maid		
	Susan	Surrey Heretic	Their Splendour
	Vanguard	Russell's Blue Cap	His Vengeance
	Vestris	Crawley Diomed	Their Venus
	Countess	From Col. Wyndham's Kennel	
	Frantic	Surrey Monitor	Their Frolic
4 Years	Waxy	Mr. Trelawny's Nigel	His Waspish
	Commodore	Duke of Beaufort's Charon	Mr. Trelawny's Dorcas
	Dauntless	From the Crawley Kennels	
	Dolly Mop		
	Barrister	Mr. Fellowes's Triumph	Sir W. Carew's Brilliant
	Nobleman	Mr. Fellowes's Roman	Sir W. Carew's Nimble
	Nestor		
	Dreadnought	Crawley Dandy	Mr. Russell's Vengeance

LIST OF FOX HOUNDS—*continued.*

AGE.	NAME.	SIRE.	DAM.
3 Years	Gad About	Mr. Trelawny's Wamba	His Gad About
	Dexter Dominick Douglas	Mr. Trelawny's Douglas	Halcyon
	Wanton Whimsy Whalebone	Sir W. Carew's Wanderer	Vestris
	Music	Mr. Fellowes's Follower	Sir W. Carew's Amity
	Damsel	Sir W. Carew's Wanderer	His Rosebud
	Rattler	Lord Yarborough's Prodigal	Oakley Comedy
	Restless	Hambledon Galloper	Their Rhapsody
2 Years	Vulcan Victory Discord	Mr. Trelawny's Douglas	Vestris
	Fallacy Pilgrim	Oakley Pilgrim	Mr. Russell's Fallacy
1 Year	Grafton	Sir W. Carew's Norval	Gondola
	Hotspur Hannibal Harrasser Hand Maid Harmony	Sir W. Carew's Hannibal	Halcyon
	Pilot	Sir W. Carew's Trojan	Pastime
	Famous Favorite	Nestor	Frantic
	Vengeance	Nestor	Vestris

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CHAPTER VI

SIR HENRY PAUL SEALE, BART.: FIRST MASTERSHIP, 1849–51

Reputation as M.F.H.—A bitch pack—Hunts his own hounds—His wonderful voice—Inconvenient situation of kennels—His idea of Devon as a hunting country—Manages Sir W. Carew's hounds for a season—Extracts from unpublished letters—Purchase of hounds from Mr. Blundell Fortescue—Country hunted: part loaned from Charles Trelawny; Curtisknowle and Woodleigh Woods—Claim still upheld—Extension of country—Favourite fixtures—Full list of fixtures—Outlying country: kennels overnight at Dorsely, Totnes—Mr. R. H. Watson's recollections—Memories of Sir H. Seale—Sir Henry withdraws to his old country—Hound list.

"Stout were his hounds and fleet his steed,
He valued them for bone and breed;
And rarely failed the day to crown
By hunting till the sun went down."
(*Dartmoor Days.*)

"SIR HENRY PAUL SEALE was one of the most celebrated sportsmen South Devon has produced. His father kept a pack of harriers, but Sir Henry's enthusiasm for hunting led him to establish a pack of foxhounds, with which he hunted for many a year, shewing remarkable sport."

So runs the notice that appeared in the *Western Morning News* at the time of Sir Henry Seale's death in 1897. Perhaps the expression "best sportsman" would have been more fitting than "most celebrated sportsman"; for Sir Henry was not given to ostentation or self-advertisement. His enthusiasm and success as a master of hounds are, however, well known, even to a generation that is apt to neglect

SIR HENRY PAUL SEALE, BART.

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interest in past sportsmen of an even comparatively recent period.

The pack, which was the property of the master and maintained by him, consisted of bitches only, averaging about twenty-one inches, and went by the name of Sir Henry Seale's Hounds. A list, dated 1849, comprising twenty-four couple and a half, besides puppies, is given at the end of this chapter.

Sir Henry hunted the hounds himself. "In addition to his many good qualities as a huntsman, Sir Henry has a fine, manly voice and uses it with thrilling effect when he has just found his fox: the echoes in the deep covers of Woodleigh know it well. Foxes are wild, but lamentably scarce; and the country is very difficult for horses, being intersected by deep lanes and perpendicular 'bottoms.' The kennels are at Dartmouth where Sir Henry lives, and are inconveniently situated for the country, being at one end of it."[1]

Sir Henry's wonderful voice is a tradition in South Devon. It used to be said that it was worth riding twenty miles only to hear him draw a woodland.

He was sensible, too, of the poetry of the sport. In an article on Devonshire hunting reminiscences in the *Western Morning News* of a few years ago, the writer, after speaking of Sir Henry as a perfect master and gentleman and referring to his beautiful voice, quotes the following passage from one of his letters:

"It is said Devon is not a hunting country; but I have always held it is one of the best for its variety and charming scenery. But a man must be well mounted and able to ride."

[1] *Fores's Guide* for 1850, p. 18.

We have seen[1] that Sir Henry Seale had the entire management of Sir Walter Carew's hounds at Haccombe during the season 1842–3, at which time he was also Mayor of Dartmouth. Sir Henry's father, Sir John, seems at first not to have looked upon the arrangement with unqualified approval, for Sir Henry says in one of the letters referred to in an earlier chapter:[1] "My father enquires about the hunting, and seems not to mind it, as I have attended most closely to the duties of Mayor." In another letter of later date he says: "My father and mother came here (Haccombe) on Wednesday to stay a day or two, and I hope the former has returned home with a little better regard for foxhunting than he came with. I mounted him on my little mare, in good wind and condition for the roads, and took him on above the hounds so that he could see them find (as they did in good style). . . ."

After stating that at a certain point in the middle of the run, "Who should appear, but my father, in the very heat of it? He had seen the fox cross the road . . ." he concludes with the remark: "I do think my father would get on as well as most of the field now; he was delighted with the run and the hounds. . . . Templer dined here afterwards. I wish you had been here to hear the old chap talk over wonderful runs in former days."

From the quotation at the beginning of this chapter, it appears that Sir John Seale himself kept a pack of harriers.

It was when Sir Walter Carew gave up his hounds in 1843 that Sir Henry Seale first started keeping a pack of his own. He purchased a remarkably neat lot of small hounds from Mr. Blundell Fortescue of

[1] See p. 43.

Fallapit and hunted after him, the country south-west of Stanborough Hill,[1] and also that between Stanborough and the River Dart. A part of this country belonged to the Dartmoor, and Mr. R. H. Watson of Totnes tells me that leave to hunt it was given to Mr. Fortescue by Charles Trelawny. The part in question seems to have been the Curtisknowle coverts and Woodleigh Woods, a request to hunt which was made to Mr. Trelawny by Sir Henry Seale in a letter dated the 12th August, 1846, which is preserved among the records of the Dartmoor Hunt, and on which that hunt still bases its claim to the above-named coverts.

On the retirement of Mr. Lane at the end of the season 1848–9, Sir Henry Seale extended the field of his operations in a northerly direction and became master of the Devon Hounds, or South Devon as they were beginning to be called, in addition to what he had been hunting before. Accordingly, we read that "Sir Henry will now hunt a large portion of the late South Devon country resigned by Mr. Lane";[2] and the same authority gives among a list of Sir H. Seale's favourite fixtures: Berry, Stover Lodge, Dartington Cot, Ogwell, Sandy Gate, Furzeley and Haccombe—all regular South Devon fixtures.[3]

For the following season, 1850–1, "Cecil" gives the undermentioned fixtures, which purport to be taken from the hunting appointments for the previous year, as Sir Henry Seale's, by which name the pack continued to be called.[4]

[1] *Fores's Guide*, p. 18.
[2] *Fores's Guide* for 1850 (compiled for the season 1849–50, see p. 73).
[3] See pp. 36 and 63.
[4] See Hound List at end of chapter, also *The Foxhunter's Guide for* 1850–1, by "Cecil."

Berry, Glaze Gate, 3 miles from Totnes.
Black Down, near Loddiswell, 4 miles from Modbury.
Bow Bridge, 3 miles from Totnes.
Bradley, near Newton Bushell.
Capton, 4 miles from Dartmouth.
Coleridge, Slapton, 4 miles from Kingsbridge.
Cott Village, 1 mile from Totnes.
Fallowpit, 4 miles from Kingsbridge.
Forcher's or Forger's Cross, 2 miles from Newton Bushell.
Furzeley, 1½ miles from Ashburton.
Gara or Gerah Bridge, 5 miles from Modbury.
Glaize Bridge, 5 miles from Totnes.
Harberton Ford, 3 miles from Totnes.
Hembury Clump, 2½ miles from Ashburton.
Holne Cot, 3 miles from Ashburton.
Moreleigh Toll Bar, 6 miles from Totnes.
New Bridge, 1½ miles from Ashburton.
New Inn, Ilsington, 5 miles from Ashburton.
Norton Daney, 1½ miles from Dartmouth.
Ogwell, 2 miles from Newton Bushell.
Rulster or Roster Bridge, 3½ miles from Totnes.
Slapton Green, 6½ miles from Ashburton.
Spitchwick, 4 miles from Ashburton.
Stanborough, 7½ miles from Dartmouth.
Staverton Bridge, 3 miles from Totnes.
Tor-bryan, 4 miles from Newton Bushell.
Whiddon, 2½ miles from Newton Bushell.

Sir Henry Seale hunted this extended country during the two seasons 1849–50 and 1850–1. As will hereafter be seen, he came a second time to the rescue of the South Devon a few years later. In the interval, he continued to hunt the country he first started in.

Some of the places mentioned, e.g. Holne, Hembury and New Bridge, were too far to be reached from the Dartmouth kennels, and, when meeting at such, the pack went overnight to Dorsely, near Totnes, where they were kennelled for that and the night after hunting in a barn belonging to Mr. R. H. Watson. I have already mentioned this gentleman's name in a casual way. He has been a keen hunting man all his long life, having hunted with the Old Berks, the Bicester, the V.W.H., the N. Warwickshire, the Pytchley, the Badminton and other good packs, besides a great deal in Devon. And as his first day with hounds was as long ago as 1837, with J. C. Bulteel, he has had time to fit in more sport than falls to the share of most men. Though born in 1826, and therefore in the 90th year of his age, he is still as active in body and as clear in mind as a man of sixty, but he no longer hunts.

Mr. Watson says : " It was always a great treat to hear Sir Henry's fine voice in drawing the coverts, and his horn was a noted one. No day was too long for him. I have left off with him by moonlight at Spitchwick—fox to the rocks. Up to the date of his selling Mount Boone and other lands, he hunted two days a week. He told me that, had he known he should have had so much money left after the sale, he would never have given up his hounds."

The last observation, however, has reference to the period of Sir Henry's second mastership.

When Mr. Whidborne took the South Devon, in 1851, Sir Henry withdrew to the country below Totnes, which he continued to hunt.

LIST

OF SIR HENRY P. SEALE'S FOX-HOUNDS,

April, 1849.

AGE.	NAME.	SIRE.	DAM.
8 Years	Wishful	Oakley Workman	Oakley Diligent
	Anxious	Mr. Bulteel's Whirligig	Sir W. Carew's Actress
	Wanton	Mr. Parry's Workman	His Flattery
7 Years	Tipsy	Sir J. Cope's Tospot	His Arrogant
	Crony	Mr. L. Steer's Auditor	His Chantress
	Restless	Surrey Jester	Surrey Rivulet
	Glory	Mr. Bulteel's Ravisher	Sir W. Carew's Governess
	Nelly	Sir A. Chichester's	Sir W. Carew's Niobe
	Amazon	Sir W. Carew's Barrister	His Actress
5 Years	Trinket	Oakley Warrior	Their Columbine
	Fugitive	Mr. Fortescue's Brusher	Mr. Brand's Fairmaid
	Humorous	Mr. Fortescue's Barrister	His Hœbe
	Rapsody	Sir R. Sutton's Joker	Lord Southampton's Rapid
	Wanton	Sir W. Carew's	His Whalebone
	Frolic, Rosebud	Warwickshire Tarquin	
	Wanderer	Heythrop	
4 Years	Riot	Mr. Fellowes'	Tiverton
3 Years	Blemish	Sir W. Carew's Abel	His Bounty
	Baroness	Mr. Fellowes' Triumph	Sir W. Carew's Brilliant
	Concord	Mr. A. Smith's Royalist	His Chaplet
	Delicate	Oakley Ferryman	Oakley Delicate
	Dinah	Oakley Ferryman	Oakley Dinah
	Hemlock	Mr. Russell's Vaulter	Vine Victory
	Proserpine	Duke Rutland's Plunder	Heythrop Pastime
	Mercury, Minstrel	Mr. Russell's Vaulter	Mr. Toat's Victory
	Caroline	Mr. Trelawney's	
2 Years	Spangle	Oakley Shiner	Their Frantic
	Frantic, Fairmaid, Fathful	Mr. Drake's Fugleman	Mr. Lowndes' Folly
	Nimble, Nancy	Norval	Sir W. Carew's Nancy
	Tragedy, Telltale	Sir W. Carew's Wanderer	Quorn Tragedy

AGE.	NAME.	SIRE.	DAM.
2 Years	Gaylass	Duke of Buccleugh's	
	Welcome	Mr. Trelawney's Douglas	Oakley Welcome
	Trackless	Mr. A. Smith's Trackless	His Fashion
	Achmet		
	Actress	Mr. Bulteel's Norval	Sir W. Carew's Angry
	Ariel		
	Truelove	Duke of Rutland's Tamerlain	Mr. Lowndes' Termagant
1 Year	Rosalind	Mr. Russell's Vaulter	Duke of Rutland's Rosalind
	Rattlesnake	Riot	Mr. Fellowes' Trifle
	Dreadnought	Lord Waterford's Drayman	Crawley and Horsham Charmer
	Streamlet	Her Majesty's Stag Hounds	
	Pastime	Oakley Warrior	Mr. Lowndes' Patience
	Bounty	Warwickshire Benedict	Warwickshire Purity

UNENTERED.

AGE.	NAME.	SIRE.	DAM.
	Julia	Mr. Fellowes' Joker	Rapsody
	Gamble	Mr. Drake's Gainsborough	Warwickshire Rally
	Dowager	Lord Redesdale's Agent	do. Dauntless
	Favorite	Oakley Factor	do. Priestess
	Rocket	Mr. Drake's Fugleman	do. Rachel
	Harmony		
	Harmless	Warwickshire Hannibal	do. Bluebell

(CRANFORD TYP.)

CHAPTER VII

JOHN WHIDBORNE: FIRST MASTERSHIP 1851–56

Purchase of hounds from Sir Henry Seale — Limits of country defined by Whidborne in a letter to Dr. Gaye: from the Exe to the Dart and from Exeter to Totnes—Business occupations—Previously master of harriers—Kennels at Buddleford, Teignmouth—Churchward and Babbage—The pack called the "South Devon"—Extent and varied character of country —A long chase—Visits North Devon: quaint account of a run—Mr. Whidborne's retirement: a presentation.

> "They talked of dangers past and days to come;
> And, as around the mantling claret passed,
> Drank to new joys more rapturous than the last."
> (*A Day at Ashbury*. By Geo. Templer.)

IT was in the year 1851 that Mr. Whidborne took over the mastership of the South Devon Hounds,[1] the greater part of his pack consisting of hounds purchased from his predecessor, Sir Henry Seale.

The country then forming the South Devon country was thus defined by Mr. Whidborne:[1] "Throughout my first term of mastership I always considered that the South Devon country embraced the whole tract between the rivers Exe and Dart, from Exeter to Totnes, and running north-westward in the direction of and out over Dartmoor to, at least, the main road leading from Two Bridges to Moretonhampstead, Dunsford and Exeter; and I believe that it in fact extended far beyond that road, as there was no other established pack of foxhounds hunting any part of that country; and until Mr.

[1] Letter from Mr. Whidborne to Dr. Gaye, dated 7th April, 1890.

JOHN WHIDBORNE

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Bragg began to keep foxhounds a few years ago and laid claim to part of the country, I never heard anything inconsistent with the whole of the district I have named being South Devon country."

At the time when Whidborne began to hunt the country he was a solicitor in practice at Teignmouth in partnership with my grandfather and father. He was also a partner in the banking firm of Watts, Whidborne and Moir, and he had married a sister of the senior partner, Mr. William John Watts, of Newton Abbot. The head office of the bank was at Teignmouth, and there were branches at Newton Abbot, Dawlish and Ashburton, from all of which it will be realized that Mr. Whidborne was a pretty busy man.

Previous to taking over the South Devon Foxhounds, Whidborne had kept harriers at Teignmouth, his kennels being at Buddleford Farm, about a mile and a half outside the town below the road over Haldon to Exeter. These kennels he afterwards used for the South Devon Hounds.

Churchward, who had been with Mr. Lane, was his huntsman, and Babbage his whip. This Babbage, I believe, was the same Babbage who in later years was with the Rev. Jack Russell.

The pack was now called The South Devon, and the hunting appointments were advertised under that title, sometimes with, and sometimes without, the addition (in brackets) of "Mr. Whidborne's."

As will be seen from the boundaries above stated, the country was of great extent. It also varied greatly in character, comprising large woodlands, cultivated land—chiefly arable in those days—and open moorland.

The following is an outline gathered from an

account of a good day's sport on the 4th February, 1854, that appeared at the time in *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post.*

The pack met at Powderham Arch and drew Powderham, Warborough and Kenton Common blank. In Mamhead a fox was found and killed with a gin on his foot. It was then two o'clock and raining hard. The field began to grumble : it is a way fields have when things go like that, but it does not help much in mending matters. The master was not out, but Churchward persevered steadily, and in the Hang of Haldon, at the back of Oxton, he hit the line of a moved fox which took the pack in the direction of the Round O. Then a holloa from that good friend to hunting, Mr. Short of Bickham, put the hounds on terms with their fox, which skirted Bickham and entered the Round O. Here a brace was afoot, and the pack divided. Nine couple went away with one fox over the racecourse, crossed the Plymouth road some way below the Race Stand, and on to the Belvidere and Haldon House, where they dwelt for some time in the coverts. During this time the huntsman, with the rest of the pack, raced the other fox through Bickham and Trehill to Kenn and Powderham, to a drain, whence he was bolted and killed. Meanwhile the first lot recovered the line of their fox, and, followed by eight of the field, ran him to Shillingford and Peamore, back through Shillingford over Squire Whippel's farm and once more to Peamore, where the earths were stopped. Then, with Fretful, Rattler, Waggish and Rosslyn leading, they went at a great pace by Little Silver coverts to Pearce's Hill and nearly to Exminster, by Mr. Burrington's farmyard to Crablake Farm, and turning righthanded to No Man's Land, and over Soper's

and Rowe's farms, ran into their fox in the open at the back of Kennford village. Only one, the writer of the account, saw the find and finish.

Like other masters, Whidborne used occasionally to take his hounds into North Devon by invitation. That they could acquit themselves as well in a strange country as at home, is shewn by the account which I reproduce from a faded manuscript which I had from Miss Whidborne, the master's only child. The composition is sufficiently quaint to justify my giving the report verbatim.

"An account of a memorable run with Squire Whidborne's Foxhounds in the year 1854, by one who was in a forward position.

"The day was fine, the temperature at 40°, the spirits were high and Diana propitious. Unkennelled from a small patch of gorse in the parish of Withypoole. There was no room for the varmint to dwell. He was off instanter. Though one of the greyhound foxes and of the indigenous sort, he did not presume on his strength, but started for his life. The field was on the *qui vive*, and emulated each other in the pursuit. On! on! on! was the cry at a rattling pace over Exford Common, Peckedstone Honeymead on to Simonsbath. Here the varmint crossed the Barle at a right angle to Cornham. This was his furthest point from home. From Cornham to Darleigh, Sandyway over Hawkridge Common to Hawkridge Parsonage Farm. Here an amusing episode took place denoting the impulse of the animal and human nature. A colt, just one and a half year old, of the old pack breed, joined the hounds, jumped the fence with the leaders into North Barton Wood, dashed through the Barle river, and up over Par Wood to Winsford Common. Here his master by a circuitous route caught sight of his colt who was going at full speed and the greatest excitement in the middle of the pack. A stentorian cry issued from the master's mouth, 'Do'ee plase, do'ee plase, stop the yearling.' On the heedless animal went, regardless of his master's cries, through heather

and brake, water and fences till he came to a wall of packed stones. Here is a hunting gate through which the field passed and shut ; cutting off young Nimrod's career. There he slept in a sorrowful mood that night. We have been off the scent ; let us cast back. The run continued over Winsford Hill, Room Hill on to the Gorse where Reynard was found. We all looked forward with anxious expectation for the woo-whoop ; men and horses were blown and longed for a respite, when a tally was heard towards the moor. We eyed each other with astonishment. We had no time to recruit the respiratory organs, but screwed up our nerves, urged on our steeds, and went at it again. A good deal of the second round was over the same ground, but within the first circle. The pace was slower. All began to lag, hounds, horses, riders. The stamina had ebbed. The plucky varmint pursued the even tenor of his course with draggled brush back over Hawkridge Common to Worth Farm. Here he was viewed in an exhausted condition and in company with two of the leading hounds by farmer Heyes who went at him with bisgey in hand, when Reynard crawled up one of the high beech hedges and disappeared like a witch of old. It only wanted the kill to make it one of the best runs on record. The first round was about 18 miles.

The second	14	,,
	32	,,

After that, one can understand that the respiratory organs should want recruiting !

At the end of the season 1855–6, Mr. Whidborne retired, his hounds going again to Sir Henry Seale. On his retirement, he was presented with a silver hunting-horn by two of his admirers, Mr. T. Bowen May and Mr. R. Harris. As we shall see, however, in a later chapter of the history of the hunt, he was destined again to wear the master's cap of office after the lapse of twenty-six years.

CHAPTER VIII

SIR HENRY PAUL SEALE, BART.: SECOND MASTERSHIP, 1856–65

Again extends country to include South Devon—Actually master of the South Devon—The *Field* quoted—The late Mr. R. F. Rendell's account of a great run: "The Conqueror" conquered—Dick Tucker and his cows—Story of Mr. T. C. Kellock—A latter-day hunt in Sir Henry's old country—Powers as huntsman—Withdraws to his old country—Sixteen times Mayor of Dartmouth—His great age—Revival of hunting in his old country—Mr. Cubitt at Fallapit—Pack known as "Mr. Cubitt's Hounds"—Mr. W. F. Brunskill starts a new pack—His good intentions frustrated—Hound sale at Totnes—Purchases by Mr. Whidborne for the South Devon.

"'Buller of Dean, give me the head;
You take the brush,' Trelawny said;
'Go bear it to your infant boy,
And deck his cradle with the toy.'"

(*Dartmoor Days.*)

ON Mr. Whidborne's resignation at the end of the season 1855–6, Sir Henry Seale bought his hounds and again extended his own country to include what then constituted the South Devon country, or at any rate a considerable portion of it. As far as can be judged (he was very irregular in sending his appointments to the *Field*), he did not very often hunt the country above Totnes. Still, though the pack retained his name, he was actually and of right the master of the South Devon country, no other master appearing until 1865, when Mr. Westlake came into office. In the *Field* of January 9th, 1864, Sir Henry Seale's hounds are advertised to meet at Berry, and in the same issue of that paper

appears an account of a run with " The South Devon (Sir Henry Seale's)."

It is most unfortunate that, though a record of Sir Henry's hunting career is known to exist, it cannot at the present time be found.

The late Mr. Robert Francis Rendell of Kingston kindly supplied me with the following account of a memorable run that took place in the month of April in or about the year 1862. Mr. Rendell was then living at Willing, where he went in 1859, and his recollection is that the run in question took place two or three years after he went there.

Having drawn all the Dartington coverts blank after meeting at Shinners Bridge, a brace of foxes were disturbed in Winnard's Copse in the late afternoon. The pack got away on the line of the dog fox and raced him to Willing Copse and across Willing Farm, where Mr. Rendell viewed him scarcely two hundred yards in front of the pack. He says that never, before or since, has he seen such a grand fox. The hounds ran on to Marley unattended, the pace having beaten off the whole field. Here Anning, Sir Walter Carew's keeper, set off in pursuit on his pony and, thanks to his knowledge of the country and of the run of foxes, managed to cut in with the tail hounds on the moor. The fox went over Brent Hill to Over Brent Wood, on to Shipley Bridge and right out over Zeal Plain to the top and was killed at Erme Pound. Anning found the hounds lying down around the fox unbroken. He carried him back to Marley in front of his saddle and sent the brush to Mr. Tom Carew. This same fox had been run several times by Trelawny's hounds, and, by always beating them, had earned the sobriquet of " the Conqueror."

Another story, the truth of which is also vouched

for, tells how, when the master was casting his hounds at a check, the late Mr. T. C. Kellock of Totnes (whose sons are to be seen among the field to-day) called out : " He has gone this way." " How do you know ? " exclaimed the astonished master. " *I can smell him, Sir Henry !* " came the answer, and, sure enough, he was right. At the next check, the master turned in his saddle with the remark : " Where is Kellock ? Send for Kellock ! "

It has been stated, in the chapter dealing with his first mastership, that no day was too long for Sir Henry. The same cannot apparently be said of Dick Tucker, who at one time whipped-in to him. People were then less fastidious than they are nowadays, and Tucker used to employ the intervals between his duties in field and kennel with other work, which included the milking of cows. The story goes that one day, in the Berry country, after drawing blank until nearly four o'clock, the hounds at last hit a cold line from Tunner's Bottom and, when pointing in the direction of Wildwoods, they began to freshen up a bit. They were promptly stopped by old Tucker. One of the long-suffering field, seeing his last fond hopes shattered in this way, rode up and exclaimed : " Why, Tucker, if you had left the hounds alone, we should have found that fox at Wildwoods." " Oh ! Yes," was the old man's answer, " *but what time should I have milked my cows ?* "

During this, Sir Henry's second mastership, the *Field* gives the strength of the pack at twenty-eight couple, and his whips as the aforesaid Dick Tucker and George Wakeham.

It may not be amiss to allude in this place to the occasion, a quarter of a century after Sir Henry had given up his hounds, when the South Devon, under

the mastership of Dr. Gaye, met at Norton Park, Sir Henry's seat at Dartmouth, on or about the 5th December, 1889, a report of which appeared in the local press at the time. The master was the guest of Sir Henry overnight, and he also put up the pack and the hunt servants and entertained the field at breakfast the next morning.

Lord's Wood was drawn blank, and so were the coverts by Old Mill. The pack then went to Downton Wood, a noted find in the old days, according to old Dick Crocker, at one time huntsman to Mr. Charles Trelawny. He had formerly whipped in to Sir Henry Seale and was out on this occasion.

Here, in Downton Wood, a brace were found, and the pack ran one to Kingston Broadridge, to Capton and on to Hemborough, where he looked like making for North Hills Plantation, the property of Mr. Netherton, of harrier fame, who was one of the field ; but the fox turned short and ran through the Norton coverts, down to Old Mill and on to Lord's Wood, where hounds were stopped, as they were so far from kennel and the day was waning.

The newspaper reporter, in his account of the day's proceedings, says : " Sir Henry accompanied us on horseback nearly the whole time." He was then eighty-three years of age, and one can imagine the memories which such a day must have conjured up in the mind of the veteran. He continues :

" It has often been said, by those who had the privilege of hunting with Sir Henry, that his musical cheer to hounds when drawing a covert, was worth riding any number of miles to hear and was never forgotten ; and that very few men could ever, when they had found their fox, get their hounds out of the

big hanging coverts that he drew as quickly as he could. At his well-known cheer, every hound would fly to him like magic, and this explains the large number of foxes that he yearly accounted for."

When Mr. Westlake succeeded to the South Devon in 1865, Sir Henry Seale once more withdrew to his old country between Dartmouth and Kingsbridge.

That Sir Henry was sixteen times Mayor of Dartmouth Hardness testifies to his popularity and to the respect in which he was held. He died in 1897 at the age of ninety-one.

[A revival of hunting in "Sir Henry Seale's country" took place in the year 1870, when Mr. William Cubitt, residing at Fallapit, established a pack of foxhounds there composed of drafts from the Bicester and Lord Poltimore's, which he hunted at his own expense. He is described as a capital sportsman and a bold rider. The field on the opening day comprised such men as Mr. John Bulteel, Sir Walter Carew, Captains Uniacke, Twysden, Hazard, Stanley Lowe, General Birdwood, Messrs. Holdsworth, Woolcombe, St. Aubyn, J. H. Square, H. R. Fortescue, Hare, and Pitts, so that Mr. Cubitt would appear to have been well received and supported. His pack, known as "Mr. Cubitt's Hounds," also took part in the Ivybridge Hunt Week at the end of the season. Nevertheless, for some reason which does not appear, the pack lasted only two seasons.

In the spring of 1872 Mr. W. F. Brunskill undertook to hunt the country vacated by Mr. Cubitt. The consent of the landowners was obtained, a pack was formed of drafts from the Blackmore Vale, Lord Coventry's, the Heythrop, the Worcestershire and other kennels, and Pattle, from the Earl of Shannon,

was engaged as huntsman. Cubhunting was actually started; but, before the regular season opened, the master found himself compelled to abandon the idea, and the hounds and horses were sold at Totnes on the 24th October, 1872. The former, comprising twenty-six couple and a half, realized two hundred and thirty-six guineas, and the latter, nine hunters and three carriage horses, eight hundred and sixty-four guineas. Mr. Whidborne bought for the South Devon two lots of hounds of three couple and a half each, one for thirty-eight guineas and the other for forty-four guineas. Of the horses, the highest price fetched was a hundred and twenty-two guineas.]

THOMAS WESTLAKE

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CHAPTER IX

THOMAS WESTLAKE: 1865–75

"Old Westlake's time": a standard of merit — Unanimous praise — Anstruther Thomson—Recollections of living persons: Mr. Albert Gould; Mr. Geo. Hext; Mr. W. C. Clack; Mr. J. C. Clack; Mr. R. Vicary; Mr. H. S. Wright—Endurance and horsemanship—"A little bit in the riding"—Rest after toil—Rev. W. H. Thornton quoted—Favourite horses—Knowledge of run of foxes—A disconcerting answer—A native of North Devon—Rev. W. C. Clack and the ruling passion—Mr. Walker King—Kennels at Kingsteignton—A presentation—Early difficulties—Criticized by *The Devonian of* 1828—Major R. C. Tucker's explanation—The critic satisfied—Hounds—Hunt servants—W. Sara; W. Derges—Runs—Mr. Cole's Harriers—Red deer in Buckland Woods—Keepers' dinner—A complimentary dinner—More runs—A change of secretary—An historic run: opinion of Charles Trelawny; account in *Baily*—Resignation—Presented with silver cup—A lost horn.

"Full well the wily fox he knows,
His habits and the point he goes;
Nor is there on the Western ground
A better judge of horse and hound."

(*Dartmoor Days.*)

THOUGH forty years have passed since Mr. Westlake's mastership ended, it is not rare even to-day to hear his sayings and doings invoked as an authority on hunting matters. Not so many years ago, "Old Westlake's time" was the accepted standard by which everything connected with the hunt was judged. One used to wonder whether it was merely a case of *laudator temporis acti;* whether the sport he shewed was really so good as we were told it was, and whether he was indeed the great huntsman he was reputed to be. Although first-hand information at this distance of time is some-

what scanty, I do not think there has been any exaggeration in regard to him. For all through the years—and I began to hunt only two or three years after he retired—I cannot remember ever hearing an unfavourable criticism of him. Colonel Anstruther Thomson had a good word for him in his speech at the Dartmoor Hunt Dinner at Ivybridge in 1872.[1] Men of sound judgment who still remember him are unanimous in his praise.

Mr. Albert Gould, now of Pinhoe, who has seen sport with many packs and who hunted much with Westlake, tells me that he always thought him the best huntsman he ever had the pleasure of hunting with. Mr. Gould draws a touching picture of the old man—by the way, no one seems to have known Mr. Westlake as a young man—arriving at the covert-side with his hunting-crop slung over one shoulder and a soft shoe on one foot, and of his throwing his hounds into cover and then resting the gouty foot on the top bar of the gate while he listened intently for the first challenge. He wanted no holloa to verify a find for he knew every tongue in the pack; and when you heard his "Go hoick!" which he pronounced "Go hi!" you could depend that it was right. He was a martyr to the gout at times, and Mr. George Hext tells how he would then, if anyone rode too close to him, utter his crescendo "Mind my leg, sir. Mind my leg, sir! *Mind my leg, sir!*"

He was much annoyed on one occasion, the very last that he hunted the country, because Mr. Gould and George Loram purposely let go from the drain in Well Covert a fox which had given a good run and which Westlake wanted to kill. But he was pacified when, at the end of another twenty minutes, the pack

[1] Col. Anstruther Thomson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 81.

rolled the fox over in a farmyard among a lot of bullocks.

Mr. William Courtenay Clack—the "Billy Clack" of his intimates—who in his young days whipped-in to Westlake, his brother, Mr. J. C. Clack, and Mr. C. E. R. Walker concur in Mr. Gould's estimate of Westlake's qualities as a huntsman, and add that he was excellent on the horn too, and that his cheery voice when a fox was found was a treat to hear, and they speak of the wonderful sport Westlake consistently shewed.

Mr. Robert Vicary, who hunted much with Westlake and speaks of having seen him ride many a hard day in a carpet slipper, describes him as a fine fellow and very handsome man, some fourteen to fifteen stone in weight, but very clever at getting over a country on Sprig of Shillelagh and Tommy; the former, thoroughbred and a "fair wonder," picked up for a few sovereigns.

Mr. H. S. Wright, whose father, the late Mr. John Wright of Newton Abbot, was one of the guarantors and chief members of Mr. Westlake's Committee, has also a very lively recollection of him and of his powers as a huntsman. As an instance of Westlake's endurance in the saddle, Mr. Wright mentions the circumstance that he would at certain periods, after hunting his hounds all day, and taking only a short interval for dinner, start off on a fresh horse from Kingsteignton for Okehampton to be ready to collect his rents in that locality next day.

He was an excellent horseman too, and, though he never had out more than one horse a day, he was never known to fail to bring him home at night, however long or severe the run might have been. Mr. Wright also tells of how a young gentleman once

bought a horse on which he had seen Westlake lead the field in his usual brilliant style on a certain occasion when mounted on him by Mr. Harris of Wood, who had the animal on hire from a dealer. After cutting a sorry figure on him the following week, the purchaser complained to Westlake that he could not get the beast along. "Well, well, sir," was the answer, "there's a little bit in the riding—there's a little bit in the riding." The horse was one, in Westlake's words, that went nicely enough on the grass, but that you had to "pick along" through dirt, and that, down-hill, shook himself to pieces. Yet *he* had gone as usual on him. Truly, there is a very big "little bit" in the riding!

He was fond of a rubber of whist. "I used to go out to Westlake's house at Kingsteignton," writes Mr. R. Vicary, "to partner him at whist against Robert Baker and the Hunt secretary, Harry Michelmore—two good players against two very indifferent ones—but we had more than our share of the luck. Westlake was a bit slow—at whist—and, when our adversaries hurried him, he would reply: 'But I must consider, sir!'"

A favourite expression with the old man, when speaking of hunting, was: "I am natturly (naturally) fond of it, sir."

Mr. Vicary tells me he did not breed many hounds but relied a good deal on drafts which he bought mostly from Lord Portsmouth.

It was Westlake's habit on the evening of a hunting day to bring two or three favourite hounds into his cosy parlour at Oakford, Kingsteignton. There, stretched at full length before the fire, they would rest, the while their master enlarged upon their

merits or the sport of the day over a bottle of sherry.

> "And here and there upon the ground
> Whimpers a happy dreaming hound:
> The pioneers of many a run
> Thus honoured when the chase is done."[1]

His companion on these evenings was often Mr. George Hext, then a young man living at his father's vicarage hard by, whose taste in sport and sherry has matured with the lapse of years. One may be pardoned for wondering whether he is the "Mr. George" of one of the many amusing stories related by the Rev. W. H. Thornton in his delightfully written Reminiscences.[2]

In another passage, Mr. Thornton says of Westlake:

"He was rather deaf, and would often make me listen for him, but his keenness of sight was wonderful. I have seen him ball a fox on a dry and dusty turnpike road as he went down it at a canter. The feat seems an impossible one, but I saw him perform it near to Goodstone Gate, on the road which leads to Halsanger. He could see at a distance of fifty paces where a single hound had passed through a covert. 'Look at the leaves, sir, look at the leaves; where are your eyes? Now, you listen for me. Can you hear 'em?'"

Mr. Westlake had some good horses, the best known to fame being Sprig o' Shillelagh, a black blood horse with a white face, which had been steeplechased in the days of Barumite and Allow Me. Nothing could touch Sprig on the moor. Charlie and Tommy, the latter bought from Mr. Soper of Bishopsteignton,

[1] *Dartmoor Days.*
[2] *Reminiscences of an Old West-Country Clergyman*, p. 347.

were also very good. But he was a comparatively poor man, and had to save his cattle as much as possible, in which he was considerably helped by his eye for a country and knowledge of the run of foxes. A lady who knew his talents in this respect, once asked him at the beginning of a run where the fox was going, and got for answer: "I don't know, my dear. I've not asked him, my dear!" His great knowledge of woodcraft and of the habits of foxes was also of material assistance in his extensive and rough country.

Mr. Westlake was a North Devon man of the fine old yeoman class. Before coming to South Devon he lived at the Manor House, Exbourne, and kept a pack of hounds kennelled near by at his own place, Wood Hall, which property has been the home of the Westlakes for nearly five hundred years.

He first settled with his pack at Moretonhampstead somewhere about the year 1861, what time the Rev. William Courtenay Clack of the same place kept a pack of harriers with which he hunted the country around there. Mr. Clack was so strongly imbued with the passion for the chase, that in later years when he was going blind, he used to make his man ride before him on a white horse; and it was only when he was no longer able to see his pilot that he gave up hunting altogether. This, however, is no longer a record. Last season (1914–15) I had the pleasure of meeting in the field on Haldon Mr. Walker King who is *stone blind*, despite which, chaperoned by his daughter, he is a regular follower of the Devon and Somerset. Truly a touching tribute to the strength of the ruling passion!

In 1863, in consequence of Sir Henry Seale being unable to cover the whole of the South Devon

country, Westlake accepted the offer to take his pack into that country once a week. Two years afterwards, in 1865, he was formally appointed master of the South Devon in succession to Sir Henry, and thereupon moved to Oakford, Kingsteignton, and built kennels in the orchard adjoining. Pending their completion, the pack was kennelled for a time in the clay cellars at Teignbridge. The Oakford kennels are still in existence and for the past twenty years have been occupied by the Haldon Harriers. On leaving Moretonhampstead Mr. Westlake was presented with a silver hunting-horn bearing the following inscription :

Presented to
Thomas Westlake
by his
Moreton Friends
September
1865.

The success to which Westlake attained was not achieved all in a moment. It is on record that his first season, so far as concerned killing foxes on the Newton side of the country, was a failure. The fact was publicly commented upon by "The Devonian of 1828"[1] and is admitted by Major R. C. Tucker of Ashburton, a friend and supporter of Westlake's, and one of the hard-riding division of that time. In his carefully kept hunting-diary, Major Tucker accounts for this in part by there being no regular whipper-in to the pack during the first two seasons, and mentions that he hopes to see better times, as a whip was then to be engaged. His entries for the season 1866–7 are also prefaced by the remark, "Mr. Westlake has a

[1] Mr. C. A. Harris.

new draft, of which great things are expected." His hopes were amply fulfilled, and in the following season "The Devonian of 1828" himself paid this public testimony to the improvement in the hunt :

"This is only the second year of the pack" (which was true in a breeding sense although it was the third *season*) "and there has not been sufficient time for a home entry. There is, however, in the kennel sufficient blood of fashion and quality in the stud bitches to ensure a good working entry for another year. Among others is Hostess, a Belvoir tan by the Duke of Beaufort's Harlequin, one of the celebrated Spangle litter, out of Sir W. Wynn's Mistletoe; Harlequin by the Morrell Hercules out of Spangle by Sunderland by Assheton Smith's Saffron, by the Duke of Rutland's Splendour. Hostess is undeniable in her shape, and a forcing hound. . . .

"Nemesis, Majesty, and Sempstress are fine shaped hounds, the former being a model of a Devonshire foxhound of 22 inches, Liberty and Lexicon are ever forward, and amongst the young hounds Dreadnought might take his place in any kennel. It is pleasant to see a new establishment forming itself gradually, and giving signs of coming worth; for even if without those ample means which make success possibly attainable at a short notice, yet judgment, science, and perseverance in the end will accomplish to a certainty that which cannot be attained without those requisites."

Will Sara was engaged as whip in 1867, and after three seasons was followed by Charles Stephens and then by R. Jennings. In 1872 Jennings made room for William Derges, who had been in the kennels since 1868 and remained there until Westlake gave up, when he went into the service of Mr. R. Vicary. Derges has since whipped-in to the South Devon at various times under different masters, and for many years past has been back in his old kennel at Oak-

ford as huntsman to the Haldon Harriers. He is active and keen still, and though, in consequence of a severe accident four or five years ago, he had to stand down and let a younger man take the horn for a season or two, he has now resumed command in the field.[1]

Major Tucker's diary shews that the country was full of foxes when Westlake first took the South Devon, and the frequency with which hounds changed foxes was one of the prevailing causes for the scarcity of kills. The foxes around Torbryan and Dyer's Wood continually baffled the pack and appeared to bear charmed lives during the first season or two. Notwithstanding this, many a good run took place even in those early days. Thus on the 13th November, 1865, a "really good run" of an hour and thirty-two minutes is recorded in the diary just mentioned, all around the Ogwell country, resulting in losing the fox in the fateful Dyer's Wood. That was after a quick thirty-six minutes to ground in the morning. On the 20th of the same month, three foxes were hunted unsuccessfully in the Denbury country, the foot-people interfering with the sport; and of three others found in and around Stover on the 27th, two got to ground and one was lost, the latter after an hour and a half's slow hunting run. Better luck attended the pack on Haldon, where, curiously enough, they more frequently killed than on the Newton side. On the last day of the same month of November a field of sixty, which included Sir Walter Carew and his two daughters and Mr. Whidborne and his daughter, met the pack at Wood. A Lind-

[1] I regret to say that since these lines were written Derges has died from the effects of a chill after hunting the Haldon all through the past season of 1915–16.

ridge fox ran through the Sands to Bellamarsh and back to Well Covert, thence to Lindridge and Wood, on nearly into Teignmouth, through Venn and by Holcombe to Luscombe Wood. Then down by the Castle nearly into Dawlish and away for Mamhead. But before reaching it, the end came, and the fox was pulled down in the road near Mamhead schoolhouse after an hour and three-quarters. The brush was given to Miss Whidborne, who, out that day for the first time, was one of the half-dozen up at the finish. In fact, but for the lack of blood, Major Tucker's diary shews that the sport all through this and the following season was, with the exception of certain "impossible" days, consistently good, two and three foxes being found on most days.

On Easter Monday, the 2nd April, 1866, there was a burning scent and the pack raced a fox from Borough Wood for forty-five minutes and killed him in the fir plantation at the bottom of Hembury without the semblance of a check. The season closed with a kill, after a hunting run of nearly three hours from the woods adjoining Compston.

Westlake's second season was prolific of much good sport: a sixty minutes' very fast run from Torbryan to Place, followed by slow hunting to Owlacombe and losing in the fog; a good hunting run of fifty-nine minutes from Yarner to Buckland; a two-hours' run from Borough Wood by Goodstone, Storms Down, Owlacombe, Bagtor, Heytor, Hound-tor Rocks, and Honeybag Tor, ending with blood; an hour and five minutes to ground in the rough country around Hennock; an hour and fifty minutes from the Sands, all over the Haldon country, killing eventually by Ashcombe Church. These are but samples of the sport recorded. Many foxes were

run to ground, the earth-stopping being very inefficiently done. Major Tucker notes this in his diary, and before the season was half over, namely, on the 20th December, his entry states that twenty-three foxes had been earthed and that Mr. Westlake was very annoyed in consequence. From another entry in the same diary, stating that the hounds got mixed in Awsewell with Mr. Cole's harriers which were trying to rouse a stag, we learn that the presence of an occasional red deer in the Buckland Woods is not only of recent date.[1]

It is noticeable that in his second season Westlake did not have a single blank day. This fact occasioned much congratulation at the keepers' dinner held at the end of the season. It is interesting to note the names of those present at the dinner. Mr. Evan Baillie, in the chair, and Messrs. J. Wills, Franklin and Rendell vice-chairmen, Captain Keating, Messrs. C. C. Wills (hon. sec.), R. C. Tucker, W. R. Mortimer, H. G. Beachey, J. Barratt, Thomas Pinsent, John Drake, William Webber, S. Bartlett, J. Blackaller, W. Reed and Adams. The keepers from the following properties attended: Stover, Ogwell, Bradley, Haccombe, Torbrian, Ugbrooke, Lindridge, Wood, Mamhead, Luscombe, Powderham, Oxton, Bickham, Haldon, Whiteway, Canonteign, Yarner, Barton Hall, Netherton Manor and Gurrington Manor. The proceedings were most enthusiastic.

By the commencement of the season 1867–8 the pack had been considerably improved, a regular whip had been engaged, and the hunt had become estab-

[1] This refers to stragglers from Exmoor, but the red deer once had a home on Dartmoor. Mr. Crossing, in his *One Hundred Years on Dartmoor*, has some interesting notes on the subject. In *Daniel's Rural Sports*, 1801–2, it is stated that "stags are likewise found thinly scattered on the moors bordering on Cornwall and Devon."

lished on a firm footing. Mr. Westlake's popularity was evidenced by a complimentary dinner given in his honour at the beginning of the season by the members and subscribers of the hunt, over fifty of whom were present. Nevertheless the master had his troubles, no less than three blank days being registered in the Haldon country before Christmas, due to restrictions as to drawing. For this he got some amends in January, on a day from Haldon Belvidere, when he ran one fox to ground after a fast forty minutes and killed another after an hour's run.

Among much good sport this season may be mentioned the following: November 9th, Canonteign. Found in Snelling Copse and had a clipping forty minutes to Botter and killed. November 26th, Yarner. Found at once, ran to Pullabrook and Lustleigh Cleave; recrossed the river, and up over the moor to the Rubble Heap, thence to Rippon Tor, Bag Tor and Rora. A two-hours' run. Boaster and Clamorous from Lord Poltimore's led most of the way. December 4th, Heytree Gate. An old-fashioned moorland run from Heathercombe Brake over Hamildon by King Tor and Shapeley Tor and over the Moreton Road to Lakeland and Fernworthy. Thence on over the moor towards Watern Tor, but, turning at the North Teign, the fox passed close under Sittaford Tor, leaving Stannon on his right, over Merripit and to ground at the Stamping Mills at Vitifer Mine. Thirty-two minutes only to this point. The fox was quickly bolted and after another twenty minutes was pulled down in the farmyard at Hatchwell. The hounds were never cast throughout the run.

The South Devon took part this year in the Ivybridge Hunt Week, meeting at Marley.

Before the season began, Mr. C. Wills, owing to ill

health, retired from the post of Honorary Secretary, and Mr. H. Michelmore was elected in his stead.

Westlake's great triumph was a run that he brought off in April, 1871, perhaps the greatest run in the annals of the hunt. That good judge, Mr. Charles Trelawny, writing to a friend at that time, said: "I wish I could learn exactly how Westlake's really wonderful run ended. Whether they killed or earthed and *where* they finished." The following is a condensed account of the printed report:

MR. WESTLAKE'S GREAT RUN

The pack met at Heatree Gate with a dry, cold east wind blowing. Westlake had eighteen couple of hounds out and was riding Sprig. They found a brace in Heathercombe Brake, and the dog-fox broke unseen, but a holloa from someone on the top of the hill soon brought up the master with the pack, and he had to gallop hard to catch the leading couple, the fox meanwhile having secured a start of eight minutes. The pack settled down quickly, and ran over Hamilton leaving King Tor and Grimspound to the right, to Challacombe and Sousand Warren, turning right handed over Challacombe Common and Vittiver Mine. The hounds then crossed the Moreton road between New House and Bennett's Cross, running at a tremendous pace; over the Jurston valley to Lakeland, thence by Fernworthy, and, leaving Grey Wethers to their left, to Teignhead, and on to Whitehorse Hill. Here riding became difficult, but a few of the field struggled on over the boggy ground, with the pack half a mile ahead, going over Ockment Hill to Dinger Tor and High Willhays, leaving Yes Tor on the right. Near Yes Tor a fresh fox was seen to get up, but the hounds stuck to the line of the hunted one and ran on over Blackator, crossed the West Ockment river and were last seen racing over the opposite hill as if either Sourton or Lydford might be their point. But no horse could follow over the bogs, and the master had now to give in and start on his thirty mile ride home with one couple and a half of hounds.

This run was considered good enough to qualify for a place in the July number of *Baily's Magazine*, where the line given is substantially the same as above as far as Blackator. After that point, it is stated that the pack turned southward, raced along the valley of the West Ockment, and is believed to have killed on Amicombe Hill. In that case, the writer estimated the run at twenty-four miles. The distance, as hounds ran, from Heathercombe Brake to Cranmere Pool, a mile or so beyond the spot on Whitehorse Hill where the field began to get into difficulties, he computed at fourteen miles, and he gives the time to this point as one hour and twenty minutes. There were, of course, no fences to hinder hounds, which never once checked, and the pace was severe. Those who went to the extreme limit were Mr. Westlake, Mr. Hole, Mr. W. C. Clack, junior, of Moretonhampstead, Mr. Barclay of Torquay, Mr. Alec Monro of Ingsdon and two or three farmers, one of whom, of the name of Norrington, had gone particularly well. The writer adds that the hounds did not return until the following day, and that the fur in their teeth and other strong indications went far to prove that they had been successful.

Mr. Westlake continued to give unqualified satisfaction to the country until, at the end of the season 1874–5, failing health compelled him to retire. He returned to Exbourne, his old home in North Devon, where he died some years later. But before leaving South Devon he was entertained at a dinner given at Newton Abbot in October, 1875, by the members of the hunt in his honour at which he was presented on their behalf by Sir John Duntze with a massive and handsome silver cup.

This cup is embossed on one side with a representa-

CUP PRESENTED TO MR. WESTLAKE

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tion of the "death of the fox," and on the other bears the following inscription framed within the over-arching boughs of an oak tree depicted on either side :

Presented to
Thomas Westlake Esquire
On his retiring from the Mastership of
The South Devon Fox Hounds
By Members of the Hunt
In testimony of their appreciation of
The sport he has shewn them
During Ten Seasons
September, 1875

This cup, with the presentation horn before referred to, is now in the possession of his great-nephew, Mr. Richard Westlake, the present owner and occupier of Wood Hall.

The memory of Tom Westlake is still cherished in his old country, where the excellent sport he shewed has never faded from the recollection of those who shared in it, and it is said that to this day men still search in the hope of finding the horn he lost at the bottom of Becky Brook.

CHAPTER X

AUGUSTUS F. ROSS: FIRST MASTERSHIP, 1875–8

A troubled reign—Comes from the Wheatland with Philip Back as whip—A nocturnal "dust-up"—Keeps on Kingsteignton Kennels—His establishment—A contrast—Opening day at Lindridge: a large field—A great day's sport—*The Field* on Tom Harris the Haccombe keeper—Record of sport—Mr. W. J. Watts at Yarner—Further sport: a fine run—Wishes to resign—Hunt meetings—Sir L. Palk condemns Torquay's lack of support—Adjourned meeting: further discussion—Dissatisfaction in the country—Mr. William Coryton prospective successor to Ross—The master's offer rejected—Negotiations with Mr. Coryton fail—Ross continues in office—Changes in hunt staff—Good sport: a hunting run; a day of bad luck—Resignation of Ross—Partition of South Devon country.

> "Such a good-natured soul he would never complain
> Of good sport in the day, and at dinner champagne."
> (*A Party at Stover.*)

MR. WESTLAKE was succeeded by Mr. Augustus F. Ross, who was undoubtedly a good sportsman, but unfortunately there were circumstances connected with his reign that prevented it from being the success it might have been. As it was, trouble arose during his second season.

Mr. Ross came from the Wheatland. He took over that country from Mr. Winter-Wood in the middle of the season 1874–5. He bought the hunt horses and took over the huntsman, James Alexander, and the whipper-in, Philip Back. When he came to South Devon at the end of that season, Back came with him, bringing his horses and about thirteen couple of hounds to add to those in the kennels at Kingsteignton. There was a "dust up" in the

AUGUSTUS F. ROSS

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middle of the night soon after, with the result that, in Back's own words: "I packed up my tack in the morning, got my money and started."

Mr. Ross kept on the kennels at Oakford, Kingsteignton. His establishment in his first season is described in a newspaper of the period as comprising forty-two couple of hounds and eight hunters; but, from the *Field* table of hunts, the pack appears to have been drafted down to thirty-two couple and a half before the season opened; quite as many, one would imagine, as the Oakford kennels could accommodate.

I have heard Miss Whidborne speak of the contrast between Westlake's simple though workmanlike turnout, and the tip-top style of Ross in his first season, when he carried the horn himself and had three whippers-in—Arthur Mason, Nat Smith and Harry Freeman—master and men in leather breeches, all very smart and well mounted. In his second season, the second and third whips were replaced by William Drayton and Ben Bowers.

The cubhunting was very satisfactory, which is not surprising, for Westlake's popularity had left the country well stocked with foxes. The pack met on the opening day of the regular season, November 1st, at Lindridge, and a field of a hundred and fifty was present to greet the new master and criticize the new *régime*. Colonel Templer was not then at Lindridge, which was in the temporary occupation of Governor Eyre, who proved an excellent proxy for the Colonel in the way of hospitality, for those were the days of substantial hunt breakfasts. The only record of the day's sport is that they had a capital run of an hour and a half, and pulled down their fox in a field of mangold near "Prestow," which may be

either Preston or, more likely, Mr. Mortimer's farm, Hestow.

A great day's sport fell to the master's lot on the 11th of the same month. After meeting at Penn Inn, a brace of foxes divided the pack in Wildwoods, the main body with the master running one to Coombe Cellars and back, through Buckland, over Milber Down to the keeper's house, through the plantation to the drain, which was stopped, and on to the Newtake where he got in. The rest of the pack ran the other fox to Penn Inn, and from there to another part of the Newtake, where he was headed by foot-people into the mouths of the hounds. The "Who-whoop!" uttered in what the writer of the account in the *Field* called "the somewhat delicate but, to the ears of foxhunters with the South Devon, melodious voice of Mr. Tom Harris who had this little chase all to himself," brought up the master with the body of the pack.

The said Tom Harris was keeper at Haccombe for goodness knows how many years, for he was with Sir Walter Carew and died only a few years ago. Up to the last, after he retired, he used still to come out hunting.

Going on to Torbrian they found again in Southlands covert, and ran "over the grass fields and diabolical stone walls," past the Rectory to Dyer's Wood, across the Broadhempston road to the earths at Penless which were shut. Then by Tor Newton House over Denbury Down, round Denbury Village and to Chandler's Wood, East Ogwell, Chercombe Bridge and Whiterocks, down to and over the flooded river, where Tom Harris, "disdaining the results to his weak throat," distinguished himself by getting across and so luring to their undoing the few others

who were with him; through Bradley Woods to Littlejoy, under Hobbin, and, recrossing the river, this time by a bridge, into the Ogwell coverts and Deer Park to a limestone quarry, where one of the hounds went over, the rest being stopped by the first whip. Scent then failed, and the fox was lost after a very fast hour and forty minutes.

Other doings of the pack were chronicled in the *Field* from time to time, but this appears to have been a bad scenting season on the whole, though there were, of course, some good scenting days. The very few enthusiasts who turned up at the Thorns on the 20th December despite the drenching rain, were rewarded with a racing thirty minutes, without a check, from the top of Haldon to Powderham, where the fox went to ground after disturbing a shooting-party there. Another fast gallop of fifty-five minutes without a check was the one from Well Covert on the 24th January, by Ideford through Luton Bottom to Luscombe, Tower Plantation and Ashcombe schools, entering Mamhead near the Rectory, and ending at an open earth in Sir Lydston Newman's coverts. Three days later the pack put in some good work in the unpopular region of Manaton and Lustleigh Cleave; and the last day of January provided an orthodox finish with a kill in the open near Mamhead after a fast twenty-five minutes, preceded by much skirmishing, with more than one fox, to and fro between Well Covert, Ugbrooke and Chudleigh Rocks. At Churston on the 3rd February a fox was run to the Cliffs from Longwood and killed; and on the 7th at Haldon Race-stand all the efforts of the master to warm up his half-frozen field were frustrated through lack of scent in the bleak easterly wind.

A good and hard day in Ross's second season, was the 14th December when he met at Reddaford Water. Mr. W. J. Watts at that time lived at Yarner, and, though himself one of the keenest of shooting men, he was always a good preserver of foxes. Of a leash in Yarner Wood the pack fortunately settled to the right one, which took a line outward to Heytor, crossed the valley to Hound Tor Rocks and round by Swallerton Gate and Hedge Barton into the Widdicombe valley, where he was lost. While they were drawing up the steep side of Hamildon, the fog came down just as the pack hit a line on the crest of the hill, and only five horsemen were near enough to keep hounds in view. After going to Headland Warren and back nearly to Heathercombe brake, and making another short ring on the top of Hamildon, the fox went straight to Buckland Woods and found sanctuary in the big earth at the junction of the East and West Webburn.

The pack met on the 18th December at Lindridge, where high festival had just been held in celebration of the coming of age of Colonel Templer's eldest son, the present owner of Lindridge, Captain J. G. E. Templer. A fox was found in Luton Bottom which took a big ring by Ashwell, the Newtake and Luscombe, then right-handed towards Teignmouth, by the back of Bishopsteignton Village to the Newtake and Luton Bottom, and on to Well Covert, Kingswood and Wood and then to Haldon, where he was lost after a two-hours' run.

Only a short record exists of a run from Heytree Gate on the 21st December which is stated to be "one of the finest moorland runs ever known with the South Devon." No time is mentioned, but the distance is given as about twelve miles. The fox was

found in Heathercombe Brake, and the points touched were Hookner Tor, Challacombe, New House, Fernworthy and Broadamarsh, the fox getting into the rocks some three miles above Post Bridge. Only the master, a pink coat and a lady were there at the finish.

On the 17th January, 1877, Sir Lawrence Palk presided over a "large and influential meeting" at Newton Abbot to consider arrangements to continue the hunt after that season. Mr. Ross had expressed his disinclination to continue unless the guaranteed subscription of £500 per annum were increased to £800. It was decided to appoint a number of gentlemen to canvass their several districts. Sir L. Palk, alluding to some observations made by Mr. C. N. Luxmoore, of Torquay, said that town ought to furnish at least a thousand a year towards the hunt, a remark which produced much laughter. The chairman intimated that if the residents of Torquay would only show a more liberal spirit towards the foxhounds, and provide the committee with the means, more fixtures within an easy distance might be arranged than had been the case up to that time. A general feeling in favour of Mr. Ross retaining the mastership was expressed, and testimony was borne to his uniform courtesy in the field. It was, however, suggested that if Mr. Ross would provide a professional huntsman and only one good whipper-in, more sport would be shown, and there would be comparatively little difficulty in increasing the annual subscriptions to £600 or £700 a year. It was decided to adjourn the meeting to the 31st of the month, and in the meantime Mr. Ross was to be communicated with and given an opportunity of conferring with Sir L. Palk, as chairman of the hunt.[1]

[1] The *Field*, 20th January, 1877.

At the adjourned meeting, after the results of the canvassing had been stated, the Honorary Secretary, Mr. A. Moffatt, at the request of the chairman, Sir Lawrence Palk, read the agreement between Mr. Ross and the guarantors, drawn up in October, 1875, when the guarantors agreed to find Mr. Ross £500 a year for three years to hunt the South Devon country. A letter was also read, in which Mr. Ross had asked Sir Lawrence Palk to intimate to the guarantors that, as the expenses were so much beyond the guarantee, he could not continue to hunt the country after that season, unless the sum was increased.

The chairman observed that either party by giving notice might terminate the agreement. It might be said Mr. Ross did not absolutely intend, by his letter, to terminate the agreement; but, on the receipt of the letter, a meeting was called at Exeter, and it was then resolved that the committee, so far as their power enabled them so to do, should terminate their agreement with Mr. Ross. It was also considered advisable that a meeting of landowners and other parties interested in the hunt should be called at Newton, which meeting had been duly held. The result of the canvass was very unsatisfactory, and subscriptions were falling off. The chairman could not shut his eyes to the fact that there was great dissatisfaction with the sport Mr. Ross had shown. Many subscribers had told him privately that unless Mr. Ross would employ a huntsman they would not continue their subscriptions. Mr. Ross had peremptorily and decidedly refused to engage a huntsman. A suggestion was made at the last meeting that the country should be divided, and he almost thought it large enough. Mr.

Pollard was afraid that if the country were divided, his part of the neighbourhood would have no hunting at all. The chairman did not know that such would be the case. At the last meeting he ventured to make a suggestion that the important neighbouring town of Torquay should contribute £1000 a year towards the foxhounds. (Laughter.) The suggestion had received some local notice, and he had heard that he had rather affronted Torquay by putting the amount of subscription so low. (Renewed laughter.)[1]

After further discussion, the names of Messrs. Ellis, Michelmore, Wills, Codner and Tucker were added to the committee, and the meeting was again adjourned.

In the meanwhile, the rumour got abroad that there was a chance of Mr. William Coryton taking the country, but at the adjourned meeting held on the 21st February Sir John Duntze explained that that gentleman declined to enter into any negotiations whatever until the country was vacant. After the position of matters between the hunt and Mr. Ross had been re-stated and discussed, a resolution was passed expressing the thanks of the hunt to Mr. Ross, coupled with the regret that his offer could not be accepted. The committee was then requested to enter into negotiations with Mr. Coryton. Those present at the meeting, in addition to the chairman, Sir Lawrence Palk, included: Sir John Duntze, Dr. Gaye, Messrs. D. R. Scratton, R. W. Pollard, Baillie, senior and junior, Ellis, G. Remfry, J. Wills, Steele, Rendell, Symons, Pinsent, Vicary and Mortimore.[2]

The negotiations with Mr. Coryton came to nought, and at the beginning of the season 1877–8 we find

[1] The *Field*, 3rd February, 1877.
[2] *Mid-Devon Advertiser*, 24th February, 1877.

Ross still at the head of affairs and still carrying the horn himself, with thirty-five couple of hounds in kennel. James White replaced the second whip, W. Drayton, who went to Lord Shannon, and the third whip was dispensed with. The number of hunting days was increased by the addition of every alternate Saturday up to the middle of February, from which time the pack hunted three days a week until well into April.

Despite Sir Lawrence Palk's strictures, good sport seems to have been enjoyed, as appears from the following notes :

1877, November 26th. Powderham Arch. The field spoiled what might have been a good run with a Powderham fox. The master was more fortunate with the one he found at Haydon, which took hounds through Oxton to Mamhead and righthanded over Haldon to Harcombe, putting in a mile on the road as these Haldon foxes will do when bustled. He was lost after being coursed by a sheep dog ; but before the master had given him up, a fresh fox jumped up. The pack raced him to Whiteway and back, through Thorns and Court Plantation, and lost this one too through scent failing suddenly in a cold storm. The first run was over the hour, and the second fifty-five minutes without a check.

December 1st. Thorns. Found in Beggar's Bush and ran over Chudleigh Hill through Court Plantation, by Ideford to Well and Ugbrooke and through the park to Chudleigh Rocks. Here a hound called Dexter rolled the fox over twice, but he managed to get into the rocks.

1878, January 7th. A hard day on Haldon with a fox from Oxton in the morning and one from Kingswood in the afternoon, but without handling either.

January 10th. Penn Inn. A field of a hundred horsemen. Apparently a long draw, for they found at Cockington. Scent was very bad, but the master was patient and judicious in his casts, the result being a slow hunting run of three hours, marking the fox to ground in a crevice in a rock on the sea coast close to Torquay. A stranger from the Midlands, out for the first time, complimented the master on the way the pack hunted and stuck to their fox through difficulties.

January 12th. Beggar's Bush. Another very hard and unlucky day. After hunting up to a fox which had secured a good start from close to the place of meeting, and running him hard to Castle Dyke and Luscombe; after rectifying a division of the pack and getting the whole of it back to the line of the hunted fox, and bringing him back to Ashcombe; after having been misled there by a false holloa; and after recovering the line and running his fox to a standstill in Oxton, the master had the mortification of seeing his hounds change on to a fresh fox at the last-mentioned place, which brought them back to near Ideford, where they were stopped. It was freezing hard all day.

January 17th. Reddaford Water. Could do nothing with the Yarner fox; but from Bagtor had a good hour and ten minutes to ground in Buckland Woods.

January 24th. Two Mile Oak. A large field. Killed in the open after a screaming twenty-five minutes from Lee Brake without a check.

January 26th. Bellamarsh. Killed a fox after three-quarters of an hour's hunting, and had a long ringing run with another around Lindridge, Wood and Ugbrooke, ending with darkness.

The month of February is generally productive of good sport and was so this year.

February 9th. Ware Barton, Kingsteignton. A large field. Found in Kingswood and ran by Lindridge House, Humber Moor, Luton Moor, Castle Dyke to the Ashcombe Valley, killing in Court Wood. This was followed by a zigzag run from Watton Brakes to ground in Mamhead main earth.

February 14th. Kingskerswell. The Down provided a good fox, which led the pack at a racing pace to Abbotskerswell, Decoy, Wolborough, Bradley Woods, Westwoods and Ogwell. Going on towards Ipplepen, a left-handed turn took hounds to Dainton and over the railway to Stoneycombe Quarry; the hounds were stopped with the exception of one which fell over the quarry and was killed. Some workmen viewed the fox on a ledge of the cliff, from which he was dislodged, and after another fifteen minutes he was rolled over in the open. Quite one of the old-fashioned in-country runs.

February 18th. Haldon Race Stand. Hit a drag in Oxton and found in Mamhead, but lost him on Kenton Hill after a circular run of forty minutes on Haldon.

February 21st. Reddaford Water. A short and sharp run and a kill, by Colehays, Brimley and Old Hayes Wood, and an hour and a half to ground with another.

April 1st. Windy Cross instead of the moor, which was under snow. Found at once, and away as if for Bridford; then, turning at the swollen river, to Doddiscombsleigh, Ashton Brakes, Kiddons and Whiteway; on over Haldon to ground at the Round O. Another fox gave a run by the Race Stand, Rushycombe, Harcombe, Haldon, Kenton Hill,

Oxton, Mamhead and Ashcombe, and apparently was earthed in Tower Plantation.

April 8th. Lindridge. A wild day, but a rare scent and a capital run. A Lindridge fox broke towards Whitelands and then ran by Kingswood Quarry, Torr Hill Brake, Stoney Copse, Sands, Gappagh, Ugbrooke Park towards Ideford, where a slight check occurred. From there through Dunscombe Plantation, Perrott's Farm, on to Haldon and back as if for Ideford Brakes, but before reaching them the pack pulled him down in the open after a very fast run of about fifty minutes.

From the above short notes it would appear that this last season of Ross's first mastership was a very good one and far from bearing out the complaints of bad sport which were heard the previous year.

At the end of the season 1877–8 Ross retired, and the country was partitioned between Sir Lawrence Palk and Sir John Duntze on the one hand, and, eventually, Mr. Fearnley Tanner on the other.

II

PARTITION

1. THE HALDON SIDE
2. THE NEWTON SIDE

SIR L. PALK, BART.

From an engraving in *Baily's Magazine*

SIR J. DUNTZE, BART.

1. THE HALDON SIDE

CHAPTER XI

SIR LAWRENCE PALK, BART., AND SIR JOHN DUNTZE, BART.: 1878–82

The country partitioned—Boundaries and terms of partition—New pack established at Haldon—Drafts from the Blackmore Vale, etc.—"The Haldon Hounds"—Sir L. Palk—Anecdote of his harriers: unpublished letter of "Squire" Trelawny—Sir Lawrence at Melton—Yachting and other sports—Mr. E. A. Palk as field-master—The advantages of early discipline—The Hon. Mrs. Gambier-Parry—Sir John Duntze—The Whistle in the field—Anecdote of Mr. Henn-Gennys—Mr. F. Short as Hon. Sec.: a popular character—Bickham and the Round O—Huntsmen: Will Nevard; Dan North—A cheery huntsman—Early reminiscences—Sporting farmers—An enthusiastic baker—Members of the field.

"In the coverts of Whiteway sly Reynard was found,
He was badgered all day and at night went to ground;
There arose on his future disposal a doubt,
But at length 'twas discovered in digging him out,
That the fox had decided the difficult matter,
By drowning himself, through despair, in the water."
(*The Chase.* By Geo. Templer.)

ACCORDING to the arrangement made for partition of the country, a separate pack was to hunt all the country to the north of the River Teign, from Teignmouth to Newton Abbot, and east, or north-east, of the railway from the last-mentioned town to Moretonhampstead. The terms of the partition were that if either this newly formed country or the country on the other side of the divisional line indicated should become vacant at any time, it was to be competent for the continuing master to claim the country so vacant.

Sir Lawrence Palk and Sir John Duntze undertook jointly to hunt the newly established pack, which

was composed of purchases from the kennels of the Hon. Mark Rolle and the Blackmore Vale. It was kennelled at Sir Lawrence Palk's seat, Haldon House, and called "The Haldon Hounds." The country allotted to it is still spoken of as the "Haldon side."

Sir Lawrence Palk was at that time Conservative member for the East Devon Parliamentary Division and had considerable territorial influence. He had formerly kept harriers at Haldon, with which he hunted a wide range of country. Though it does not concern the South Devon Hunt, I am tempted to reproduce the following interesting letter written by "Squire" Trelawny in December, 1864:

"Last Saturday week we met at Goodamoor. . . . Palk (Sir Lawrie) met with his harriers (of course by invitation from Sir Walter Carew) at Kingsbridge Road on the same day, and spoiled, perhaps, the best run of twenty years, *besides killing a fox!* I must say both Baronets, especially Carew, were heartily vexed. They could not well help meeting on the Saturday, as Seale was much nearer to Marley on the Friday. But to my run.

"We found close to Lee Mill Bridge, on the Plymouth and Ivybridge turnpike road, ran to Slade Viaduct, through Storridge Wood, over the Yealm, up to and all over Hanger Down, both Grange Wastes, all over the top of Stall Moor, crossed the river *above* Piles; went two-thirds up the hill to Three Barrows, and then, all of a sudden turned back, *recrossed the river* and was finally earthed close to where he was found. At the turning-point my terrier-lad and man on second horse from Stall Moor saw some twenty horsemen ahead of the hounds (of course Palk and his harriers).

"Now I argue thus: any fox who had dared to scorn Piles and had only just crossed the Erme, a bumper, and which he shewed his dislike to by running up the side of the river before he crossed, surely would, if not headed, have gone at least to Woollholes and far more probably to Skerraton or White Wood and Langham Marsh, if the hounds had

not pulled him down before he got there. Now, as Skerraton is possibly sixteen miles and White Wood, etc., about twenty from where we found, I need not tell you that we were probably baulked of a real clipper! . . .

"P.S.—Walter Radcliffe is in a d——l of a way about the harriers."

The letter reveals the good spirit and fine temper of a sportsman in the highest sense and one who knew how to bear disappointment.

It was Sir Lawrence Palk's father, Sir Lawrence Vaughan Palk, who used to hunt from Dalby, near Melton Mowbray, and is mentioned by Nimrod among the "Crack riders of England." Sir Lawrence himself in his early days was an habitué of Melton for seven years or more. He was also devoted to yachting, and his *Lancashire Witch* and *Gulnare* were well known in the Squadron. He was also fond of shooting and, in addition, he was a very good coachman and a member of the Four-in-Hand Club.[1]

Sir Lawrence's second son, Mr. E. A. Palk,[2] acted as field-master in his father's absence, which from ill-health was more or less continuous during the last two seasons of his mastership. Mr. Palk was rather strict with his field, and some of us have reason to be grateful for the discipline acquired in those early days, which saved us from committing many a solecism in later years. The youthful delinquent who incurred the field-master's just but quickly abating displeasure was often consoled by a word of encouragement from his sister, now the Hon. Mrs. Gambier-Parry, who hunted regularly with the pack, and was extremely keen and a good rider.

Sir Lawrence Palk's colleague, Sir John Duntze,

[1] *Baily's Magazine*, July, 1878.

[2] Sir Lawrence was not created Baron Haldon until 1880.

was very popular with all classes here, as he was in the Badminton country, where he had been in the habit of hunting for many years. His hard-riding days were over, but he took a keen interest in the sport and was out regularly, though, as already stated, the active duties of field-master really fell to Mr. E. A. Palk. Sir John, who was married, but had no children, lived at Exeleigh, a house he had built at Starcross, close to the entrance to Powderham Park. He was thus at the extreme end of his country and a long way from the kennels. In the field, he wore a low felt " topper " and a black, or very dark, coat with the Beaufort button, and carried a whistle instead of a horn. In those days a whistle had not come to be a part of the regular equipment of a hunt staff, and the hunt servants relied on their voices. That reminds me of an incident that occurred with the Haldon Hounds a year or two after Sir John Duntze resigned. We were mystified by a shrill and prolonged whistle that came from the depths of the Luscombe Woods above Dawlish. It was found that Mr. Henn-Gennys, a deaf-and-dumb gentleman then hunting with the pack, had viewed the fox and was taking the only means at his command of communicating the fact to the huntsman.

Mr. Davies tells how Sir John Duntze, meeting Jack Russell soon after the latter had been persuaded to give up keeping hounds, said to him : " You can't live without hounds, Russell—I know you can't. Now I'll make you an offer ; I'll give you five pounds, if you'll give me one, for every year that you don't keep hounds." And Mr. Davies adds that Sir John was right, for the following season saw Russell with a fresh pack.[1]

[1] *Life of the Rev. J. Russell*, p. 252.

Mr. Frank Short was appointed honorary secretary to the new pack. He was immensely popular, and, living at his father's place, Bickham, was well placed in the centre of the country. Mr. Short's father had been a keen sportsman and a famous whip in the palmy days of the Road. "Short's Plantation" is mentioned frequently in Sir Walter Carew's diary and was a noted find in his day, as was also the covert known as the Round O, which also formed part of the Bickham property. Thanks to Miss Short, Mr. Frank Short's sister, who until quite recently continued to live at Bickham, the reputation of these coverts has been well maintained.

The first huntsman to the Haldon Hounds was Will Nevard, who, however, died in Exeter Hospital after only one season with the pack. He was succeeded by Dan North from Mr. Snow's in North Devon. North had a musical voice and a shrill scream, blew a good note on the horn and his hound language was good and expressive. In these days, he might have been considered as rather on the noisy side; but the silent system, whatever may be its advantages elsewhere, is not highly thought of in the woods and hills of Devon, and Dan North knew the importance of getting a good body of hounds together when his fox was first afoot. No feeble tootle on the horn will do this in such coverts as Bridford Wood, Cotleigh Wood, etc., where hounds spread themselves in drawing. Altogether he was a good huntsman, knew how to hunt a fox and shewed a great deal of sport. Foxes soon increased in number, though of course blank days were not unknown, especially towards the end of the season.

I may perhaps be pardoned for mentioning the first really big run I remember. Where we found, or

what the exact line was, I know not. All I do know is that I followed Dan North and George Loram when they turned away from the rest of the field, that we crossed the ugly bottom of Kiddens in the course of a long run and ultimately marked our fox to ground in a drain beneath a road close to Ideford village at dark, and that Mr. Palk and his sister were about the only other members of the field that caught the pack again before the finish.

The hunt was very strong in sporting farmers in those days; substantial men and first-rate sportsmen, who were always well mounted and knew all the points in the game. There was George Loram from near Exminster, mentioned just above, a fine specimen of the British yeoman, whose weight was counterbalanced by his good horsemanship and who had an exceptional knowledge of hunting. He had a wonderful voice, too, of which he made rather more use than our field-master quite approved of. Then there were White, of Ashcombe, on his bald-faced chestnut; Sam Archer of Doddiscombsleigh, whom none could beat in that mountainous region; Carroll Adams, then farming under Sir Lydston Newman, now prevented by rheumatism from doing more than go out on wheels with the harriers; Elliott of Crablake, mounted on a well-bred one; Paul of Lysons, a yeoman farmer whose family have been settled in that locality for centuries; the two Annings; Jeremiah Strong of Pennycombe; Mortimer of Matford; G. Short and H. Short of Dunsford; T. Pyle of Blackheath, G. Short of Cotley and John Dymond of Humber.

Many others there were whose names escape me at this distance of time, but I must not omit John Wills, tenant of Mr. Comyns of Wood, whose riding weight

was, I believe, over twenty stone. He it was who made the artificial drain in the Newtake, overlooking Bishopsteignton, in the days of Westlake, of whom he was a staunch supporter.

A great sportsman was Hollett the Kennford baker, and somewhat of a character to boot. Not content to hunt only with the Haldon Hounds, he would, on occasion, get up at two o'clock in the morning so as to finish his day's baking in time to start at eight o'clock on a three-hours' jog to meet Mr. Ross at New Inn or elsewhere, riding the horse that was to carry him all day. This man loved hounds and their work. "Sir," he said to me, as the pack spread fan-wise to recover the line, "a beautiful lady is a beautiful thing; *but a pack of foxhounds is a deal beautifuller!*" Of course the weather never daunted him. Once he observed me shivering, and I admitted that I felt the cold intensely. He did not tell me, as Jorrocks told Benjamin under like circumstances, to "think of ginger"; but he laughed out softly: "Ah! 'tis you lean beggars." Now, this, to some, may sound familiar to the verge of rudeness, but I would have them know that our Devonshire country folk are never rude. Frank and outspoken they are, yet with a frankness that is never unkind, and an outspokenness that is free from any intentional disrespect. This attenuation of figure must, I suppose, have been particularly marked, and I remember a farmer once telling me that my father was "a finer-looking gentleman nor you'll ever be, I reckon." That again was only his way, as I well knew, of expressing appreciation of my father's physique: he meant no disrespect to me. Alas! no one calls me lean to-day!

Old Hollett's son and grandchildren have inherited

his passion for hunting. The former on wheels (since his health forbade him the saddle) and the latter mounted rarely miss joining hounds when on Haldon.

There were many resident hunting people in the country. Besides the masters and the honorary secretary, there were, Mr. Ley of Trehill; Mr. O. Bradshaw, then living at Canonteign; the late Lady Exmouth; Mr. and Mrs. C. Chichester of Kenn; and Captain A. Chichester of Alpington, always well mounted; Mr. Studd of Oxton; Mrs. Byrom of Culver; Mr. Eales of Eastdon; Mr. H. F. Carr and Mr. Rew of Exeter; Mr. Heacock of Countess Weir, whose cattle were of an excellent type; Mr. and Miss Whidborne; Major McLeod, a fine horseman; Major Keating, a very hard one; Mr. E. C. Haggerston and Mr. Godfrey Lee, all of Teignmouth. The last-named, now in his ninety-second year, still takes his ride on Haldon, though he considers he is past hunting. He used to go remarkably well when in middle life, and his wonderful grey mare, Bluebell, lasted him many years. There were also Mr. Evan Baillie of Filleigh, his son, Mr. Alec Baillie, Mr. Lord of Kerswell Rock, whose kennel of dwarf beagles became so well known in later years; Captain G. Ellicombe and his brother, Mr. H. Ellicombe of Chudleigh; Mrs. Trood of Matford, Dr. Baker of Dawlish, and Dr. and Miss Pycroft and Mr. R. Hooper of Starcross, Mr. Hole of Bovey and Captain J. G. E. Templer when home on leave. The Church was represented by the Rev. G. Bird of Christow, who set an excellent example to the rest of the field, for he went, indeed, "as straight as a bird." He was a very short-legged man and rode a very tall horse with a bad stringhalt in both hind legs. If a bank was not to be jumped in the ordinary way, Mr. Bird would send his horse over

it alone and catch hold of the animal's tail to hoist himself on to the bank after it. He always wore a hunting-cap in the field and was a thorough workman. Then there was Mr. George Finch of Exeter, a good sportsman and one always ready to help in "raising the wind." The officers of the R.H.A. at Topsham Barracks generally provided a contingent.

It is sad to think how few of these are left to talk over the capital sport enjoyed under the dual mastership. Though several are still alive and well, not one is to be found among a modern field on Haldon.

CHAPTER XII

MR. EDWARD FAIRFAX STUDD: FIRST MASTERSHIP, 1882–84

Mr. Studd and Mr. Whidborne succeed to the Haldon side—Kennels at Oxton—Claim the country vacated by Ross—Claim waived in favour of Mr. Hemming—Temporary re-union on his failing—Both sides of country hunted as "South Devon"—A brief partnership—A staghunt and its sequel—A friendly settlement—A change of plans: the country again partitioned—Some reflections on the conventions of hunting—Was Mr. Studd's action a breach?—Obligations of an M.F.H.—Wolf-hunting by the Duke of Beaufort—Orthodoxy of bigotry?—A successful season—A popular secretary—A contrast with present-day conditions—Sir J. Duntze presents the pack to Mr. Studd—Changes in the pack and notes on individual hounds—A fine run—A curious finish—Comments—Mr. Studd's aversion from bagmen—A silver fox?—Good sport in his second season—Another staghunt: Mr. Tremlett's Harriers—Sam Gilmore.

"The thrilling tones still vibrate on my ear,
When every hill in tuneful chorus rung
And every dell your deepest wilds among,
Filled with the chaunting of my gallant cry,
In tenfold echoes paid their melody."

(On looking back from Haldon for the last time on Stover.
By Geo. Templer.)

WHEN Sir Lawrence Palk and Sir John Duntze gave up the Haldon pack in the spring of 1882, a meeting was held at Exeter to decide upon future arrangements. At that meeting Mr. Whidborne of Teignmouth and Mr. Studd of Oxton were elected joint-masters. Sir John Duntze lent them his pack of seventeen and a half couple, with a promise to convert the loan into a gift after one season, and gave a donation of £100. Kennels were fitted up in the farm buildings half a mile from Oxton, under the Hang of Oxton, the pack

MR. E. FAIRFAX STUDD

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was strengthened by purchases from Mr. Ross, Mr. Froude Bellew and from other sources, and Dan North was kept on as huntsman.

Concurrently with these arrangements came the resignation of Mr. Ross who, as will be seen later,[1] had been enjoying a second spell of office as master of the South Devon, then hunting the Newton side or southern portion of the country. Thereupon the new joint-masters of the Haldon claimed the portion vacated by Mr. Ross, as they were entitled to do under the terms of the arrangement entered into when the country was first partitioned,[2] and at the same time they of course resumed the name "South Devon" for the pack with which they were to hunt the re-united country. The re-union, however, was only momentary. The claim to the Newton side appears to have been waived in favour of a gentleman, Mr. Hemming, who undertook to hunt that side with a separate pack; it re-attached shortly after when he failed to make good his undertaking, and during the cubhunting the country was hunted as one by Mr. Whidborne and Mr. Studd jointly. Then, on the opening day, November 2nd, an incident happened that brought their partnership to a sudden and dramatic end.

The pack met, according to custom, at Haldon Race Stand, but did not find until reaching Oxton. There, in the Hang of Oxton, a *wild red deer* was roused, a stag of about four years. The presence of this visitor from Exmoor was totally unsuspected, for though red deer did in those days, as they do now, sometimes penetrate as far south as Moreton Woods and Buckland Woods, they had never been heard of on Haldon. The incident brought out at once the

[1] See Chapter XV. [2] See p. 127.

difference in temperament of the joint-masters. Mr. Whidborne, old and orthodox, gasped at the idea of running a deer; Mr. Studd, young and bursting with keenness, gave the order to "let them go!" In that, he might be thought to be but making a virtue of necessity, for getting to the heads of hounds on that steep hillside where the bracken grows to a height of over six feet, was an impossibility. But he frankly declared afterwards that any fellow with young blood in his veins would have done as he did. Dan North needed no confirmation of the order. He came from North Devon, and with him the chase of the wild red deer was a natural instinct.

The stag crossed into Mamhead and set his head to the south, running dead up-wind as far as Luscombe. There he turned, retraced his steps to Mamhead, went on through Rushycombe and across the racecourse to the top of Kiddens, down the valley to Doddiscombsleigh, on to Dunchideock Brake and into Perridge, over the Exeter road below Longdown and right on as far as the Okehampton road, where the hounds were whipped off from the stag dead-beat in an orchard about a mile and a half from Exeter. Time, five and a half hours. I regret to say that the severity of the run caused the death of three horses. Being unable to ride myself from an accident, I was out on wheels and only saw the start. My elder brother, who was mounted, got home at ten o'clock that night.

Without a doubt, it was a great run; but it was at once condemned as a most irregular proceeding. Trouble quickly followed. Sir John Duntze wrote that he had lent his hounds to hunt fox and not stag, and that until he had an assurance that such a thing should not happen again they were not to

leave the kennel; and Mr. Whidborne's outraged feelings induced him to announce that he could not continue in partnership with anyone capable of such a lapse from the path of sporting rectitude.

Ultimately, through the good offices of Lord Haldon and Mr. Studd's ready acceptance of the judgment passed upon him (unaccompanied, it is to be feared, by either inward sense or outward sign of contrition), the matter was smoothed over, and a settlement was arrived at under which Mr. Studd was to continue to hunt the Haldon side alone, Mr. Whidborne undertaking to hunt the Newton side with a separate pack. Each pack to hunt two days a week, Mr. Whidborne on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and Mr. Studd on Mondays and Thursdays.

Here I should like to pause for a moment, and to ask the question: "Was Mr. Studd's action in running a stag so unquestionably a breach of any rule, usage, or custom governing the sport of foxhunting, as it was at the time universally considered to be?" In the first place, it is not a question of hunting law. Hunting law, properly so called, only arises where the rights or interests of more than one pack are concerned. Neither, it seems to me, does usage or custom come in, for such, to be of any authority, must be general in application or acceptance, and we know that the wild red deer exist only in two special localities, namely, in and around the forest of Exmoor and in the New Forest. Without a doubt, a man is entitled to keep a pack to hunt either fox, hare or fallow deer: equally without a doubt, a master of a recognized pack of foxhounds would break an accepted rule of foxhunting who allowed his hounds to hunt what to them is ordinary riot, such as hare or fallow deer. But does the rule

extend to prevent him from hunting a wild animal differing entirely from the ordinary riot to be found in the ordinary hunting country? A wolf for instance? You would be as likely to find a wolf as a wild red deer in almost any hunting country in England. Yet I seem to have read of a pack of fox-hounds drawing, without protest, for a wolf escaped from a menagerie. Be that as it may, it is a fact that in 1863 the late Duke of Beaufort took five and twenty couple of his magnificent pack to France, to Poitou, to hunt the wolves there. Will anyone say he committed a breach of any hunting ordinance in so doing? The difference between his case and that of Mr. Studd is that in the former the master sought out the wild animal, and in the latter the wild animal sought out the master. The answer to those who would argue that the red deer is akin to the fallow deer, is that the two are very dissimilar in scent and hunting attributes. The one is wild and very rare; the other, mostly, tame and common. Another distinction, though it has lost its significance nowadays, is that, ever since the days of Canutus the Dane, hart (which is expressly stated to include stag and "all other red deer of antlier") and hind have been beasts of venery, or beasts of the forest; buck and doe, beasts of chase merely.[1] I yield to none in orthodoxy, whether in religion or sport; yet orthodoxy must not be confounded with bigotry. Without expressing any opinion as to whether Mr. Studd's action was justified or not, I hope I have said enough to shew that there are grounds for doubting whether he really was guilty of a breach of any rule of the sport.

Mr. Studd was very successful in his first season,

[1] *Manwood's Forest Laws.*

and shewed most excellent sport. Many things conduced to this result. The master threw himself into his task with all his wonted energy and gave a great deal of personal attention to the affairs of the hunt. He was very popular and had the advantage of an equally popular honorary secretary in the person of Mr. F. Short, who continued in that post. The season was a very good scenting one, and incidentally a very wet one; and the country was thoroughly well stocked with foxes, only two blank days, and those very wild ones, being recorded. Notwithstanding this, the number of kills amounted only to ten-and-a-half brace, a fact which will be understood by those who know what a hollow country the Haldon is. It is almost safe to say there is either an artificial drain or a natural earth in every covert of consequence, and Mr. Studd was not of a temperament to care for the tedious operation of digging, or his total of kills for this season might have been far higher.

In those days, the country was very open. There was hardly a strand of wire of any sort on Haldon except the old boundary fence at Lidwell, which was well gated; a great contrast to the present day, when miles of barbed wire exist without fulfilling any useful function. Pheasant-rearing, too, was on a very much smaller scale then, and very few shootings were let.

After such a satisfactory season it was only natural that the hunt should have asked Mr. Studd to continue for a second year, and no difficulty was experienced in raising the stipulated subscription of £400. Sir John Duntze then formally presented his pack to Mr. Studd.

The second season was as successful as the first,

and comprised a great number of excellent runs. Eleven brace of foxes were killed, and twelve-and-a-half brace run to ground. Out of the fifty-seven hunting days in the season proper, four only were blank, and on the others sixty-three foxes were hunted.

These two seasons of Mr. Studd's first mastership shew what can be done with a small establishment. The pack at the end of the first cubhunting season numbered twenty-eight couple and a half, but the withdrawal by Mr. Whidborne of the eight couple belonging to him on the severance of the partnership, left Mr. Studd with only twenty-and-a-half couple with which to start the season, and this in a country where the flints and dwarf gorse are notoriously trying to the feet of hounds, and at a time of year when drafts were not easily obtainable. True, the distances to covert were not as great as those with which Mr. Whidborne had to contend beyond the Teign; but for all that, the days were mostly long ones, since the master would never stop drawing as long as there was any chance of a run. What hounds there were, however, were good, and representative of some of the best kennels, and they had the advantage of condition and of knowing each other, the latter point being one that is sometimes overlooked in kennels where breeding is carried on to an extent greater than is warranted by the number of hunting days. Allowing for casualties and the usual cases of temporary absence or disablement, it was very creditable to the huntsman that he was generally able to put in the field from fifteen to seventeen couple. On occasion, towards the end of the season, his pack would be much smaller, as on the 21st March when twelve couple only raced into a Culver fox in

forty-five minutes, notwithstanding the vast woodland of Cotleigh came in the line of chase.

In the second season, the gaps in the ranks were made good by a draft from Mr. Froude Bellew. Even then the master was very little stronger in hounds, being able to put forward only one home-bred couple out of nine couple put out to walk, several of the litters being very late ones. This year the pack numbered in all twenty-two couple.

Among the hounds that came from Sir John Duntze was a remarkably good bitch, then at the completion of her fifth season, called Sally, bred by Lord Coventry, being by his Singer out of his Dowager. With her came two of her puppies, Susan and Sorceress, first-season bitches, by the Haldon Sportsman. All three were so much alike in appearance that it was difficult to tell one from the others, and the puppies turned out as good and as lasting as the mother. Sorceress was particularly good in her work and I can remember her carrying the line down a dry flinty Haldon road when no other hound could own it. She lasted into her eighth season and was the only hound of that age in the list for 1889. Her sister, Susan, distinguished herself by having a litter of seventeen by the Warwickshire Archibald, eight of which came into the ring at puppy-judging time. This was in the mastership of Lord Haldon in 1884, Susan being in whelp when he took over the pack. One of these eight, Armorer, took first prize for dogs, and two others, Archeress and Ardent, first and second for bitches, the second prize for dogs going to Solomon, a son of Sorceress and Rutland, the latter a Haldon dog from the Warwickshire.

Of Susan's eight puppies, five, namely, Archibald, Archeress, Armorer, Ardent and Artemis, were put

forward. They all remained in the pack for five seasons, and the three last went through a sixth season. If I remember rightly, all except Ardent were badger-pies, and all turned out excellent hunters.

Another capital home-bred dog was the red-pied Samson, by the Haldon Saracen, who had completed his second season when he came to Oxton. That his blood was thought well of is shewn by the hound list for 1892 (after Dr. Gaye had come into office) which comprises, besides his direct offspring (then in their seventh season), namely, Saraband, Plausible and Platoff, six-and-a-half couple of hounds got by the last-named dog.

On the other hand, the fashionably bred Wagtail, Watchful and Welcome, by *the* Belvoir Weathergage out of Lord Macclesfield's Rosemary, had all to be put away after the first year, their second season, which affords an illustration of the uncertainty of hound-breeding.

Bandsman, by the Heythrop Bugler, a good worker and comely, was an example of how a hound sometimes belies his name, for, despite his musical name and ancestry, he was quite mute and had to go.

Of the sport itself in Mr. Studd's first mastership the following notes will give some idea :

In his first season : December 23rd, a five hours' hunt, with repeated changes, on Haldon and around Oxton and Mamhead, whipping off finally in the dark at five o'clock. This was typical of many a day which provided several hours' sport without any great point being made.

On the 8th January, one of a brace in Haldon Belvidere gave the pack an hour's run. Another fox from Lakecombe took the hounds to Doddiscombs-

leigh, down past Dunchideock to Ide, back by Lower Brenton to Haldon Byes, through that covert to Cotleigh and down to Culver, on to Holcombe Burnell Wood and Mr. Snow's covert behind Lamb Inn, then crossed the Exeter road into Perridge, and was killed in the open below Dunchideock at the end of two hours and a half without hounds being cast.

A curious ending was that to a run from Oxton on the 15th January. After some work in cover with a leash of foxes, one of them set his mask for Powderham by way of Helwell and Ringsdon, and after crossing the park to Powderham Belvidere, he went down to the marshes, crossed the Great Western Railway and was drowned in the estuary of the Exe. His carcase was picked up after the tide went down, and brought to Oxton that evening. The pack had a narrow escape in crossing the railway as a train passed down between the fox and the hounds. The unusual finish gave rise to talk about a drag, a bagman from over the Exe, etc., but the plain truth was that, once on the open marshes, the fox never had a chance to turn. As for a drag or a bagman, I can testify that Mr. Studd, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing intimately for over thirty years, had a horror of such practices, which belong to a different category altogether from that of the staghunt incident.

A frequent place of meeting was the sixth milestone on the Exeter and Okehampton road for the purpose of drawing Mr. H. Drew's and Mr. Snow's coverts, and the country to the north of them. From that fixture on the 18th January the pack killed a fox in Cotleigh Wood after an hour and a half's ringing run.

It makes one envious in these days to read of a brace of foxes being found at the Thorns and of the

terrier bolting three more on the same day from the drain in Well Covert while hounds were running yet another. This occurred on the 22nd January, 1887.

On the next hunting day, 25th, Lindridge was the base of operations. Finding in Whitelands, the line lay through Wood, Kingswood, Well Covert, Sands, Bellamarsh and Chudleigh Rock, back by Ugbrooke Park to Ideford, Humber Moor and Newtake. Here the pack divided, one lot going to Kingswood and Wood, where they were stopped from another fresh fox; the other lot meanwhile going to Lidwell and nearly into Teignmouth, returning by Bishopsteignton to Wood.

The number of foxes, and the absence of a proper whip, resulted in hounds often dividing. Sometimes both lots killed their fox, and once they both ran to ground in the same earth after taking different lines.

Rough weather is not always hurtful to scent. On the 12th February, a day of cold and heavy rain-storms with a gale of wind, a fox, bolted from Lidwell drain, took the pack at a terrific pace to Oxton and back to Mamhead, where the pack turned down into Oxton again, killing him in the laurels by the big pond there. An old dog fox.

On the 19th of the same month, another old fox was killed at Dunchideock after two hours and ten minutes without hounds being once cast. The pack had met at Windy Cross and found in Willis's Gorse, the run taking place in the hilly country touching Doddiscombsleigh, Cotleigh, Longdown, Perridge, Culver, Holcombe Burnell, fifth milestone Okehampton road, Mr. Snow's coverts, Perridge again and Dunchideock.

The staying powers of the pack were well tested a

week later, on the 26th February, when a two-hours' hunt from Canonteign in the morning was followed in the late afternoon by a run of an hour and forty minutes in the Whiteway, Haldon, Doddiscombsleigh and Ashton country, ending with blood. This fox was found at four o'clock.

Mr. Studd's diary contains the interesting note that on the last day of this season a white fox was said to have stolen away from Long Covert, Bellamarsh, which, as also the Sands, hounds had drawn blank. How far the report is true is doubtful when it is considered how often the Ugbrooke coverts were visited by hounds in those days without ever finding such a fox.[1]

After a very successful time during cubhunting, Mr. Studd's second season opened with a good but twisting hunting run to ground; and the second week in November furnished a good hour and a quarter with a fox found at Beggar's Bush which took refuge under a barn at Whiteway, whence he could not be dislodged.

Other good runs this season included an hour and thirty-five minutes from Sands, killing close to Mamhead House; a very smart gallop from Warborough to Mamhead, and thence with a fresh fox round Oxton and Mamhead and on to Lidwell; a four-and-a-half hours' hunt from Woodlands to Eastdon with a bad scent in a north-east wind; and a very hard day from Windy Cross. A very unusual line, at least in modern days, was that taken on Christmas eve by a Luscombe fox which ran to the cliffs at Hole Head and apparently got in. Time, thirty-five minutes; very fast. Returning to

[1] A man I have no reason to disbelieve, told me in the summer of 1914 that he frequently saw a silver fox in Taw Marsh on Dartmoor.

Luscombe, it took the pack over an hour to force another fox to face the open, from which he soon returned, and nearly two hours to kill him. This was a most creditable performance, for Luscombe and its twin wood Summercombe are, for some reason, perhaps the worst scenting coverts in the country, and the ground, of course, became foiled in addition.

Owing to the field being thrown out, Mr. Studd was the only one to see a good run on the 7th January with an afternoon fox from Black Forest. The line was a crooked one, through Oxton by Kenwood to Mamhead Rectory, across the Park to Oxton again, over Paul's Farm and once more to Oxton and through all the woods there, and finally by Haydon Common, Cole Park and Babel's Bridge into Powderham, where the master stopped the hounds in the dark.

On the 22nd January the pack had a very fast burst of forty-five minutes without a check, killing their fox in the open by the lower Lodge at Ugbrooke after finding at Humber Moor and running to the Thorns and round by Bellamarsh.

A Bridford Wood fox gave a good run on the 3rd April, making away to Blackingstone Rock and by Dockham to Marden Down, back through Dunsford Wood, over Pixie Rocks and away towards Lustleigh over the moor, but turned and ran back to ground at Pixie Rocks. Time, one hour and a half.

It would be wearisome to extend the list. A season is to be judged not by two or three good runs, but by the average of sport throughout its continuance. The days referred to above were, mostly, no better and no worse than a great number of others, for the sport all through these two seasons was up to a very high standard. Mr. Studd used to say that

scent was frequently at its best in the evening; certain it is that a great proportion of his best runs, often ending with blood, took place in the late afternoon — eloquent testimony not only to his own keenness, but also to the stoutness and condition of his hounds. It is not every pack that will run *and kill* a late afternoon fox in such a country as the Haldon.

It is interesting to record that in November, 1883, just a year after the incident of the red deer, another staghunt took place in the country, but this time with harriers. Mr. Tremlett's harriers had found a wanderer from Exmoor at Newton St. Cyres, and, after a good run, he had been taken near Ashcombe and lodged in farmer White's barn at Ashcombe Barton. After a week's rest and good feeding, the stag was taken in a cart to Lamb Inn, Longdown, where, although the fixture was not advertised, an enormous field assembled. Mr. Tremlett's pack was strengthened for the occasion by several couple from Mr. Townsend's harriers, and among them was one shaggy black-and-tan fellow whose appearance savoured of the Principality.

The stag had seven points and an offer, but I do not remember their disposition. He was enlarged in a field on the north side of the road and went away at first towards Whitestone as if to return whence he came. He soon turned, however, and took a line through Perridge and Cotleigh to Haldon Belvidere, over the plain of Haldon, and by Harcombe to Ugbrooke. Here he took soil and swam about in the ornamental water for some time, while the hounds, which had tailed terribly, enjoyed much independent diversion among the fallow deer in the park. Fortunately the huntsman, Sam Gilmore, who was some-

what of a character, but had an excellent reputation as huntsman, came up at this juncture. He had been thrown out, almost from the start, through not knowing an inch of the country. He soon set matters right and the stag going again, and the chase proceeded to Kingsteignton, where the stag was taken (but not killed) in a brook in the orchard behind Mr. Whidborne's stables. Mr. "Jemmy" Deacon, in trying to collar the deer, was thrown down, and was lucky to escape with a damaged shoulder. Mr. Studd and Dan North were amongst those who rode the run.

The members of the field in this mastership were much the same as in the previous one. The circumstances of Mr. Studd's resignation appear in the next chapter.

MR. E. FEARNLEY TANNER

LORD HALDON

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CHAPTER XIII

LORD HALDON: 1884–86

Mr. Studd stands aside—A change for the worse—Gift of the pack by Mr. Studd—Conditions attached to the gift—The pack strengthened by drafts from Belvoir, etc.—Kennels at Haldon House—"Lord Haldon's Hounds"—Dan North deposed—Good prospects of sport not fulfilled—Story of a pinafore—Field-masters: Mr. J. H. Ley; Mr. O. Bradshaw—The Babbacombe murderer—The High Sheriff fails to hang his man—Financial troubles—Lord Haldon resigns—Mr. Studd to the rescue—Lord Haldon and Mr. Studd: a correspondence and its results.

"For the huntsman to take them, too proud or too slack,
Sent his horse with his hounds, and rode there on his hack."
(*The Chumleigh Club.* By Geo. Templer.)

WHEN it became known, on the death of the first Lord Haldon in 1883, that his successor was disposed to take on the pack hunting the Haldon country, Mr. Studd readily resigned in his favour. The change was not to the advantage of sport in the district; for, although the new master was fond enough of hounds and hunting, he, not unnaturally, had the laudable ambition to hunt the pack himself, to which course, as he took no subscription, no one could object. Unfortunately it is not given to everyone to have the necessary qualifications for a huntsman, a truth which all admit, while everyone makes a mental reservation in his own favour. The result in this case was disastrous as far as sport was concerned.

Mr. Studd presented his pack to Lord Haldon, only attaching to the gift a condition that the latter would,

on retirement, in his turn make over to any gentleman selected as his successor and not having a pack of his own, a pack equal in quality and number. Lord Haldon added to the pack drafts from Belvoir and elsewhere, and the kennels were once more at Haldon House. The pack went by the name of "Lord Haldon's Hounds." Dan North was retained as kennel-huntsman, but deposed in the field to the position of first whip. This of itself would have handicapped a better huntsman than Lord Haldon, for the great majority of the hounds had for several seasons owed allegiance to North as their huntsman, and naturally would not accept the new *régime*, and, as he said himself, it went to his heart to drive them away from him. All the other conditions were favourable. The master and men were splendidly mounted, the landowners well disposed, as were also the farmers, and foxes were plentiful. Nevertheless, sport on the whole was bad, although, as the strangeness of the new conditions wore off, there was an improvement, and sometimes we had a very pleasant day's sport.

In those days our provincials were apt to view with suspicion any approach to "dandyism," and there was a certain smartness about the turn-out that was, quite wrongly no doubt, associated in their minds with the falling off of the standard of the sport provided. I shall never forget the expression on the face of old William Paul, Mr. Whidborne's stud groom, on the first occasion that he saw the master get out of his break to mount his hunter. He had taken the very proper precaution of putting on an apron to protect his leather breeches. "Good lord!" exclaimed the old man, "I never saw a man come out hunting in a pinafore before!" There was some excuse for him,

for leathers are not very popular wear in this wet country, and before the days of steam-rollers few people went to cover on wheels because of the bad roads, and so, even with leathers, had no need of an apron.

Mr. J. H. Ley of Trehill, whose family has been associated with the sport in the Haldon country since the days of John King, or Mr. O. Bradshaw usually acted as field-master in Lord Haldon's absence, on which occasions North handled the pack. It happened that on the day that John Lee, the Babbacombe murderer, failed of getting hanged in Exeter gaol after three attempts, Mr. Bradshaw, the High Sheriff at the time, was engaged in trying to kill his fox instead of hanging his man, and it was commonly reported at the time that his commendable choice of occupation involved him in a fine of five hundred pounds for the failure to carry out the sentence of the Court. I believe this report was wholly untrue, the supervision of an execution being always the privilege of the under-sheriff.

Lord Haldon had not only overrated his abilities as a huntsman; he had also overestimated his financial position, and at the end of a couple of years he found himself in monetary difficulties and compelled to give up the hounds. In this he was more to be sympathized with than blamed; there are always those who are ready to take undue advantage of a man's good nature, and in his case it is to be feared that he was the victim of dishonesty as well.

The trouble came at an unpropitious moment, for it was not until September, 1886, that he definitely resigned the mastership. After one or two fruitless meetings in Exeter, Mr. Studd generously offered to take on the country again, and his offer was accepted at a meeting held on the 24th September, 1886.

Lord Haldon then wrote to Mr. Studd expressing his readiness to return twenty-one-and-a-half couple of hounds in accordance with the condition referred to earlier in this chapter, and asked whether Mr. Studd would care to take at a valuation the further seven couple that had been added to the pack. He added: "As soon as this is settled . . . you are welcome to take the hounds; and, indeed, even pending this, I see no reason whatever why the hounds should not go out, so long as you provide the cattle." Mr. Studd did not want more than twenty-one couple and a half, but reminded Lord Haldon that he was entitled to that number of sound hounds fit for work, and, considering the matter to be thus settled, he removed all but seven couple from Haldon to Oxton.

Lord Haldon took great exception to what he called "this precipitate step"; he wrote forbidding Mr. Studd to use the hounds for hunting, or to draw his coverts with any other hounds, and refused to respond to Mr. Studd's conciliatory letters. His indignation does not seem to have been justified by the facts, but, in passing judgment on his action, every allowance must be made for the frame of mind of a man harassed by financial difficulties and suffering bitter disappointment.

CHAPTER XIV

MR. EDWARD FAIRFAX STUDD: SECOND MASTERSHIP, 1886–91

The pack sent back to Haldon—Begins hunting with six couple—A rapidly formed pack: presents and purchases—Lord Haldon returns his pack to Oxton—The master's energy—Notes of sport: an unusual line; a great run; a late find—Death of Lady Rolle—A trial day east of the Exe—Meeting at Exeter—Hunting on that side definitely established—A formidable undertaking—Hospitality in the new country—A memorable day—The East Devon Hunt founded—Colonel Garratt: a long mastership—Dan North goes to the Western—Succeeded by Smith—Mr. Studd as huntsman—Anecdote of George Loram—Mr. Studd's perseverance—His horses—Bad falls—Members of his field—The Chudleigh Harriers—Tom Lambell killed in the field—Billy Butler—The "Jackdaw Inn"—The "Blizzard in the West": personal experiences—Puppy-judging at Oxton—Good runs—Mr. Tremlett's Hounds—Afternoon cubhunting—A bad season and its causes—Lord Clifford—Further notes of sport—Mr. Studd resigns—His fondness for fishing.

"' Grace still in every vale abounds,
But one dear charm is wanting;
No more I hear my gallant hounds,
In chorus blithely chaunting."
(*Farewell to my old Horn.* By Geo. Templer.)

IN the face of Lord Haldon's attitude as disclosed in the last chapter, Mr. Studd had no option but to send back to Haldon the pack he had "purloined," after putting in only two days cubhunting. He thus found himself in the embarrassing position of being pledged to hunt the country and having only one-and-a-half couple of hounds in kennel in the first week of October. Nothing daunted, he set to work at once, and after making a fresh start with *six couple* on the 23rd October, was able by the

beginning of the regular season to produce a hound list giving the names of twenty-six couple and a half. These consisted of presents from Mr. Heywood Lonsdale and Lord Portman, and of purchases from Sir Bache Cunard, Mr. W. R. Corbett, the Dartmoor, Mr. Garth, Lord Galway, Mr. Lindsell and the West Somerset. A present of three couple from the Duke of Beaufort brought the total up to twenty-nine couple and a half. Then, on the 12th November, Lord Haldon, who had evidently thought better of it, sent his pack to Oxton, and these, with a couple and a half presented to Mr. Studd by Lord Zetland, formed the subject of a supplemental hound list and brought the total strength up to fifty-two couple and a half. This enabled the master to pick and choose, and by Christmas the number was reduced by weeding out to thirty-five couple.

Mr. Studd at this time was in active practice as a barrister in London, and was consequently a good deal away from home during this and the succeeding seasons. Yet a man of his active nature thought nothing of running down from town by an evening train, hunting the following day and returning that evening to London. This, when he came later on to hunt the pack himself, would have been too great a strain for most men, but he made nothing of it.

He does not consider the season 1886–7 to have been a good one; and yet this can only be considered relative, for there were many good runs. That from Netton Cleave, Canonteign, on the 11th November was over a very unusual line, the fox going away towards Lustleigh, and crossing the railway and the river Teign into Houndtor Wood, whence he ran through Yarner to Rora and got to ground in Ilsington Town Wood. On the 23rd of the

same month they had a fast forty-three minutes from Whiteway to Doddiscombsleigh, killing in the open. Meeting a fortnight later at Pocombe Bridge the pack had a hard day with a brace of foxes from Mr. Snow's coverts and ran till stopped by darkness. The same coverts provided a fox on the 27th January that gave a great run, first through the heavy woodlands of Perridge and Cotley and then away northward, skirting the town of Crediton and killing at Yeoford Station. St. Valentine's Day was marked by the pack killing a Luscombe fox in the middle of Bishopsteignton village after he had failed to effect an entry into a dwelling-house; and a very long and tiring run was that of March 1st, in the course of which the pack changed foxes twice, the last one being lost among the farm buildings at Langdon, which he had been seen to enter dead beat.

At the extreme end of the first season, which finished with an early hunt (8 a.m.) on the 14th April, there were two or three blank days. That these were not due to want of perseverance may be inferred from the fact that on the 4th April the pack found at 5.45 p.m. and, after a racing fifteen minutes or so, ran into an old dog fox.

Towards the end of the season, owing to the death of Lady Rolle, a very large landowner on the east of the Exe, who had always objected to hounds, it became possible to think of hunting on that side of the river, and a desire for opportunity very soon found expression in that locality. By special request, Mr. Studd took his pack to Farringdon House on the 2nd April, but the result was disappointing, as it was nearly 5.30 p.m. before a fox was found, and he got to ground in less than half an hour. Nevertheless, this stimulus to the desires of the East Devon sports-

men settled the question, and they determined that the country must be hunted in future. Accordingly the subject was broached at a meeting held at Exeter on the 22nd April to make arrangements for the following season, and, at an adjournment thereof held three weeks later after a meeting of those interested east of the Exe had taken place in the interim at Exmouth, Mr. Studd consented to continue on a subscription of £600 and to hunt each side of the Exe one day a week, putting in a third day if a further sum of a hundred pounds was forthcoming.

True to his promise, for the next three seasons Mr. Studd hunted the country east of the Exe one day a week and sometimes three days a fortnight. The undertaking was a formidable one, for the working up of a new country is always a laborious matter, and, notwithstanding the goodwill of the large landowners and the support of the tenant farmers, it was impossible to expect a sufficient stock of foxes for the first season or two in a country which, report says, had not been hunted for fifty years. In parts near the coast, too, the foxes clung to the cliffs, so that from time to time it was necessary to devote a morning on foot to rattling them with a few couple of hounds, and even this did not always have the desired effect of scattering them inland. In addition, the distances were often great, especially for such fixtures as Hembury Fort, Escot, Cadhay Bog, The Grange and Sidmouth Junction; and, wherever the pack met, it was always necessary both in going and returning to go round by Countess Weir Bridge, which forms the southernmost crossing of the river Exe. All this entailed considerable wear and tear on hounds, horses and men. Few men with enough country nearer home would have had the energy and public

spirit to embark on such an enterprise; fewer still would have kept it going for three seasons.

But if, from the circumstances of the case, foxes were not too plentiful in Mr. Studd's first season east of the Exe, hospitality was abundant, and the interest and goodwill of the landowners and others were testified by the number of hunt breakfasts given at different places of meeting, though all were not on the scale of magnificence of Mr. Rolle, who entertained some two hundred and fifty people on the first occasion of hounds meeting at Bicton. These functions have now gone out of fashion, but there is no doubt that indirectly they tended to promote the popularity of the sport, although the keen hands were wont to grumble at the "waste of time"—usually after they had satisfied their own requirements in the way of chicken and champagne.

Despite the uncertainty of finding, whenever a fox was forthcoming the hounds gave a good account of themselves, and, taking the three seasons throughout, much excellent sport was enjoyed in the new country.

The particulars of such sport hardly come within the scope of the present work, which purports rather to deal with the doings within the limits of the South Devon country proper. One day, however, the 17th January, 1889, may be mentioned, when, after meeting at Four Cross Ways, Hembury Fort, they ran a fox right away to the Wellington Monument and earthed him in the dark on Holcombe Farm in the parish of Hemyock after two hours and forty-six minutes. It was nearly midnight before some of those who were at the finish reached their homes, and doubtless the hunt staff were among the latest. Before this run, the hounds had had a very fast forty-five minutes to ground with another fox.

By the end of the season 1889–90, the sport had taken such a firm hold on the people east of the Exe that they decided to have a pack of their own. So it came to pass that the "East Devon Hunt" was formed under the auspices of the Hon. Mark Rolle, Lord Poltimore, Lord Dunboyne, General Drewe, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. W. R. Coleridge, Colonel Garratt, the Rev. J. H. Coplestone, Colonel Talbot and many others. At a very representative and enthusiastic meeting held at the New London Hotel, Exeter, Colonel J. A. T. Garratt was elected master, a position for which he was peculiarly fitted, not only by reason of his having acted as field-master for Mr. Studd whenever the latter was absent, but also from the fact of his possessing most of the qualifications necessary to the office. The choice was a prudent and fortunate one, and Colonel Garratt remained a very popular master of the East Devon for twenty-two years, at the end of which period he resigned in 1912 in favour of his son, Major L. C. Garratt. Mr. H. W. Gould, who had acted as honorary secretary on that side of the water for Mr. Studd, was appointed to act in the same capacity for the new hunt.

On the formation of the East Devon pack, Mr. Studd directed his energies to the more efficient hunting of what was properly speaking his own country, the Haldon side of the South Devon. Dan North, who had returned from Haldon to Oxton when Lord Haldon gave up, had left to go to Mr. Bolitho's, The Western, in 1888, and had been succeeded by Smith, who, in addition to being a good kennel-huntsman, was a capital man in the field and possessed a great knowledge of how to hunt a fox. He left after two seasons, and Mr. Studd then deter-

mined to hunt the pack himself for the future. Gery, from Mr. Lobb's, was engaged as kennel-huntsman and to carry the horn when professional duties kept his master in London. Gery, however, though a steady man and a good servant, was a failure as huntsman.

It is rather surprising that a man of Mr. Studd's quick perceptions and impulsive nature should have had the patience and perseverance so essentially necessary to a huntsman in such a country as the Haldon side. Yet he had these qualities in a marked degree, and, indeed, occasionally carried the "Let-'em-alone" system too far, as the following instance will shew. Hounds had checked on a large patch of burnt heather on Haldon. Some moments elapsed, and still the master did not take hold of them. George Loram then rode up to him and said quietly: "Beg pardon, sir. The fox isn't here, sir; *we should see h m if he was here, sir*." Loram had "a way with him" and could say these things, and Mr. Studd was too good a sportsman to take umbrage at a friendly hint from so good a judge. So he held the pack forward and recovered the line at once.

Mr. Studd's tastes as a naturalist had developed his power of observation, a faculty so useful to a huntsman. He was, in addition, very persevering, and no man was ever more keen. He would hang on to the line of a fox as long as there was a scrap of scent left, and he was very thorough in drawing. We were never asked to go home as long as daylight served, and it was often dark before we finished, for many a fox was found after four o'clock and some, when days grew longer, an hour and more later. Once, in cubhunting, a tired fox could not be forced to leave the little covert at Harcombe for more than a few

hundred yards; the ground became foiled, scent was failing as the morning advanced and the hounds were getting beaten. Many huntsmen would have given up and gone home; Mr. Studd went home, but it was only to change his tired pack for a fresh one, while those of the field who were left had some hasty refreshment at the front door of Oxton. I really forget whether he killed that fox or not, but the incident speaks for itself.

During a portion, at any rate, of Mr. Studd's mastership the hunt horses were supplied on job by Strong of Bampfylde Mews, Exeter, but the master always had some useful ones of his own to ride himself. In particular one very well-bred little bay mare called, I think, Polly used to carry him remarkably well, and a huntsman needs a good one to get quickly up such a hill, for instance, as the steep side of the Harcombe Valley and begin to gallop at the top. But, in truth, the master troubled little about his horses; as is the case with many huntsmen, his hounds absorbed his whole interest, and the horse was looked upon as a means of getting to the pack. He was a light weight and a good rider. We probably get fewer falls over fences in Devonshire than in other countries, for if a horse can jump banks at all, he will generally manage to get to the top of them, and it is surprising how very seldom he falls in landing, even where the drop is deep—and it is very deep sometimes—or the bank is stone-faced. But Mr. Studd had at least two heavy falls on the flat; one in turning quickly out of a field into a road close to Ugbrooke Park, and the other through deviating slightly from the track through the bog in Luton Bottom while galloping fast. On both occasions he was knocked out of time for a while, but insisted on

finishing out the day. Though by no means robust in appearance, he was wiry and very hard, and, indeed, is so still. To this day, he wears no waders when fishing, even when he has a long drive home, and yet he is a stranger to rheumatism. Not content with having one son at the front in Flanders who has already been wounded and returned to the firing line, another badly wounded in the Dardanelles, a third invalided home from France, a fourth in the Flying Corps and a fifth with the latest Canadian Contingent, he succeeded, through sheer determination, in getting himself accepted for active service. After serving some months in France with yet a sixth son as his subaltern, he is now commanding a section of an ammunition column near Salonika, and roughing it with the youngest.

In addition to many of those mentioned in a previous chapter as prominent hunting men and farmers on the Haldon side, Mr. Studd's field in his second mastership often included the following: Captain Neville Thomas of Mellands; Sir Alfred Fairlie-Cuninghame, Bart., then Mr. Cuninghame, mounted on anything he could get hold of, and very keen; Dr. de W. Baker, Miss Cann, Messrs. A. and J. McCasland and Mr. Southwood from Dawlish; the present owner of Luscombe Castle, Mr. P. M. Hoare, and his brother, Mr. Lennox Hoare; Mr. Reginald Hooper of Starcross; Miss Bradshaw and her brother; Mr. Daniell, Kenbury; The Hon. Mrs. Haverfield, Exeter; Mrs. Treeby, Ashton Manor; and Mr. H. Parson, Teignmouth. Mr. Charles Chichester of Kenn was honorary secretary to the hunt. Tom Lambell, the Chudleigh butcher, a thorough sportsman, was so fond of hounds that in the early 'eighties he started a pack, first of

beagles and then of harriers, called the Chudleigh Harriers, which proved to be the foundation, as at present established, of the Haldon Harriers. He met his death some years later in the field, on Dartmoor, being knocked down by his horse when leading over a stone wall. Falling against a granite boulder, he was killed on the spot.

A familiar figure in the field was old Billy Butler, bailiff at Oxton. He had been in the service of Mr. Studd and his family all his life and was an old man and toothless when I first saw him, the occasion being the finding of the red deer on the opening day in 1882 as related in an earlier chapter.[1] He it was who first gave us the clue to what was afoot, as he came tearing down the road below the Jackdaw Inn lisping out in his cracked voice : " Stag gone away ! Stag gone away ! " I may here explain that the said Jackdaw Inn has been the disappointment of many wayfarers who knew it only by name, for it consists merely of a deserted tollhouse, now in ruins, and acquired its name (on the authority of Billy Butler) from the fact that a certain old woman who once had charge of the turnpike gate kept a tame jackdaw and did a little refreshment business there on the quiet.

Billy Butler was quite part of the hunt establishment and had a wonderful instinct in placing himself in a position to view a fox. He was an enthusiast, and insisted in subscribing handsomely to the pack while it was kept by his master. He remained on at Oxton as a pensioner until his death about the year 1912 at the age of ninety-four. When well over eighty, he used still to poke about on his pony, and, when past that, would turn out on foot to have a look at hounds when they were visible from Oxton. Only

[1] See p. 137.

THE SOUTH DEVON (EXETER DIVISION) AT THE ROUND O. 1889

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a year before his death he complained to me of his hat and boots having been hidden to prevent his going out in the rain to watch the pack on the hill. His was a kindly and faithful nature. Devoted to his master, who treated him as a friend, he never forgot his position. Yet he spoke his mind freely, as when he saw Mr. Studd for the first time in a pair of brown polo boots, which had just then come into fashion, and asked him: "Master, whatever makes you wear them foppish boots?" He appears on the extreme left in the picture facing this page.

Another useful retainer at Oxton was Robinson the stud-groom, who was always at hand when a fox had to be taken by the scruff of the neck out of an earth. He is still to the fore, and for years past has brought his master's children successively into the field.

It was in Mr. Studd's mastership that the western-most counties were visited by the terrific snowstorm commonly known as the "Blizzard in the West," which wrought such fearful havoc. Plantations were decimated, roofs blown off, vessels torn from their moorings and wrecked, the postal and telegraph system paralysed; travellers by road and rail had to stay where they were or struggle to the nearest shelter, cattle, sheep and ponies, and indeed some human beings, died of exposure, and whole trains were snowed up. From the evening of that day, Monday, no train reached Plymouth from up the line until the following Saturday.

The storm occurred on Monday the 9th March, 1891, on which date the hounds met at Haldon Race Stand. The wind was bitterly cold from the north-east, but we found a brace of foxes and hunted one for a while with a fair scent. About noon snow began to fall and the wind increased in force. Still we

persevered, and ultimately put a terrier into the drain in Kiddens, where he remained an unconscionable time. Probably he found it warmer underground and went to sleep while we shivered above. At last we left him and went on with the intention of drawing Oxencombe. It was now one o'clock and snowing hard, and the plain of Haldon was already white. Finding that the field had all left, I induced Gery (who, to do him justice, was keen enough) to take the hounds home, and then started homewards myself by way of the Race Stand as being the most direct route. By this time a hurricane was raging, driving the snow before it in fine powder without allowing time for the formation of snowflakes, and this characteristic of a true blizzard doubtless accounts for the name by which this storm is still remembered.

On the high exposed ground of Haldon its full force was felt, and it was impossible to raise one's eyelids. The cold was intense. My thick hunting-coat felt like a silk racing-jacket. I was riding a thoroughbred mare, half-sister to Robert the Devil, that would have cantered the dozen miles home well within the hour under normal conditions. But the inequalities of the ground being hidden by the snow, which in addition was balling frightfully, precluded anything beyond a slow walk, and the journey in consequence took four times as long as it should have done. The changed aspect of things and the difficulty of seeing made me miss the usual crossing below the race-course, but we got through at another spot, which was lucky. All this while, I was anxious about my friend, Mr. Fred Davies, now Lieut.-Colonel F. G. H. Davies of the Guides, thinking he might be attempting to return by the way we had come over Haldon

together in the morning, which he did not know well enough to find in such weather. I blew my horn, which I carried as field-master in Mr. Studd's absence, but, as happened to Mr. Jorrocks on a famous occasion, the raging tempest scattered the notes before they were well out of my mouth. It was a weary ride; not a single habitation lay in the line of route even after leaving the common and striking the road at the Thorns, and all the way the snow was driving into my face and left ear. At last, battered, wet and half perished with the cold, I reached home, which is more than many people did on that memorable day. I found Mr. Davies had left before me and had been advised to take the longer but more sheltered road. So great was the fall of snow, that it was still to be seen a month later lying where the drifts had been. The recollection of that day calls to mind Strutt's reflection on the sport of fox-hunting: "Although the pastime be great, yet many times the toyle and paine is also exceeding great: And then it may be called eyther a painful pastime or a pleasant payne."

The annual puppy-judging at Oxton was always a great event. The invitation was issued by advertisement in the papers and was addressed to all interested in the hunt and "all farmers whether they hunt or not." In addition to the interest attaching to the young entry (and Mr. Studd took a lot of trouble to improve the pack), it brought together the hunting men and the farmers and promoted much good fellowship.

As the name "South Devon" had been resumed by the pack hunting the Newton side, Mr. Studd, during this his second mastership, called his pack the "South Devon (Exeter Division)."

Reference has been made to the sport shewn on the Haldon side during the first season of the period covered by this chapter, and it will be sufficient to refer to one or two of the best days of the remaining seasons.

On the 3rd November, 1887, what was described as an " extraordinary " run took place from Pocombe Bridge, Lower Fordlands Covert providing the fox. They ran by Ide Village and over Rose Bridge Farm to Pocombe Bridge, Westwood Farm and Cotley Wood, turning then to the right and crossing Cuttridge and Bond House Farms, on to Traveller's Rest and over Endtown Farm and straight away to Whitestone Woods, where they killed.

Another, a fast fifty-five minutes ending with a kill, occurred on the next following hunting day, 7th November, a Kiddens fox taking the pack at a great pace over the country around Whiteway, Ashton, Trusham, Ranscombe and Farley, and finishing by Chudleigh Station. This was followed by another good run and a kill on Haldon in the afternoon. One capital hunt was brought off in a blinding snowstorm on the 17th February from Powderham, but the snow at last put an end to the run.

The season 1888–9 was marked by some specially good days. On Boxing Day, despite bad weather, there was a rare scent all day, and, not content with killing one fox and earthing another, both after good runs, Mr. Studd found a third late in the day and killed him by starlight near Matford after a good hour and a quarter in the open.

The 14th January was another day worth recording, two foxes getting to ground at the Round O, the first going straight there from Luton Bottom, the pace being very fast ; and the second, found near the

Race Stand, after going first to Harcombe and then taking a big ring by Whiteway, Oxencombe, Harcombe and Chudleigh. It should be mentioned that Mr. Short, the owner of the Round O, did not like the earths to be stopped, being more intent on preserving than on killing foxes.

But the run of the season, and indeed of many seasons, was that on the 28th January, when the pack met at Bellamarsh. One fox from the Sands was killed after a short ring. The pack was then laid on the line of another which had gone towards Well Covert, where they fresh found him and settled down to run like mad. The line was through Luton Bottom, Tower Plantation, Ashcombe, Mamhead, past Mamhead House, then left-handed to Thorns, on to Harcombe, Oxencombe, Whiteway, Kiddens, Bramble, Lakecombe, Windy Cross, Culver and Holcombe Burnell, and the fox was killed in Mr. Snow's Covert by Traveller's Rest. The point was fifteen or sixteen miles, and only six besides the huntsman, Smith, got to the end. Among these was Mr. C. Young of the 80th Regiment, a complete stranger to the country. I have no record of the time, but remember that the pace was very severe up to Kiddens, after which it slackened. Unluckily Mr. Studd was not out that day.

More foxes were found in the following season, 1889–90, than had ever been found before, the total number hunted, including cubhunting, being a hundred and fifty. Nevertheless, or perhaps for that very reason, it is difficult to pick out any particular run as shewing special pre-eminence, though there were many excellent days and the average standard of sport was distinctly good. Perhaps the St. Patrick's Day's run, on the 17th March, was as

typical as any. Meeting at Haldon Belvidere, the pack first put a vixen to ground and then raced a dog-fox for three-quarters of an hour, when he too found shelter below. Finding again at Goosemoor, they ran their third fox by the Belvidere to Kiddens, left-handed to Whiteway and round to the Belvidere again, and then on by the Brick Kilns to Doddiscombsleigh and Scannacleave, killing an old dog-fox in the open.

The pack occasionally clashed with Mr. Tremlett's Hounds, which hunted some country north of that covered by Mr. Studd, and in this particular season also got mixed up in Bridford Wood with Mr. Norton's Hounds, and the two packs together hunted a brace of foxes around that big woodland.

Mr. Studd tried once the experiment that has been tried by other masters, namely, afternoon cubhunting, and met at Oxton at 3 p.m. on the 7th September, getting home at eight in the evening. The experiment, however, was not repeated.

Several causes contributed to make Mr. Studd's last season, 1890–1, a bad one. In the first place, throughout the cubhunting season and well into the regular season, the weather was very dry and hot, with a consequent absence of scent. It was, in fact, a very bad scenting season throughout. After Christmas, frost and snow interfered considerably with the sport. Then on the 9th March came the famous blizzard already referred to, following an abnormal February during which month not a single drop of rain fell in the country. The practice of letting shootings, too, which had been on the increase of recent years, took an even more extended form, with the result that not only did the number of foxes decrease in a marked degree, but many coverts were

closed to hounds until after Christmas. In fact, the master was put to it to fit in two days a week and had to have frequent recourse to such places as Bridford Wood and Dunsford Bridge. Mr. Studd, too, was away a great deal this season.

Nevertheless, as happens even in the worst of seasons, there were some days when scent served well, and on those good runs were scored.

Thus, on a bleak and misty 4th December, one fox was killed after a fast forty minutes round Haldon and Whiteway; this success was followed immediately by a run from the Half Moon Piece at Whiteway, by Bramble and Higher Ashton Brakes to Loyal Moor and to ground, dead beat, in Whiteway drain; and this fox had hardly got to ground when another was holloa'd away, taking the pack through Oxencombe, over the plain of Haldon by the Race Stand to Goosemoor, Freer's Bottom, by Woodlands House to Bickham, and ultimately to ground in the stronghold of the Round O.

Lord Clifford, though not a hunting man, has always been a staunch fox-preserver, and, moreover, no difficulty has ever been made about drawing his coverts. He it was who provided the fox which gave a capital chase on the 15th December, 1890, keeping well to the open country. First visiting Chudleigh Rocks, this fox went on to what used to be called Perrott's Plantation, taking its name from the excellent farmer hard by; from there, over One Tree Hill and by Ideford to Well Covert, which he threaded from end to end, and thence through the Sands and Gappagh Brakes to Sandslade, where he went in. An hour and a half's good hunting run.

Again, nothing could be better than the doings of the pack on the day they met at Canonteign, 12th

February. The local fox refused to leave the rough country around the cleave and eventually went to ground. Kiddens was then drawn blank, but the Belvidere sheltered a brace, one of which safely reached the Round O after a spin *viâ* Goosemoor. Fox number three, disturbed in the Round O, went back over the same line of country to the Belvidere, thence to Dunchideock Wood and Cotleigh, where he waited for the pack. The pace improved as hounds ran on over Halscombe to Idestone Farm and back by Dunchideock, and after a ring through School Wood and Belvidere, and a flourish in the direction of the Round O, the hounds pulled him down in the open on Haldon Lawn. There was a rare scent that day.

At the end of the season 1890–1, the fifth season of this his second mastership, Mr. Studd, to the regret of his supporters, gave up the country, which then for a time, as will appear hereafter, ceased to be hunted by a separate pack.[1]

Mr. Studd was, and still is, an enthusiastic fisherman both for salmon and trout. A celebrated master of hounds, I think it was John Chaworth Musters of the Quorn, on being asked what he considered to be the best sport in the world is reported to have answered: "Why, of course, foxhun— no! damme, salmon fishing!" and I am not sure that Mr. Studd's answer would not have been the same. He would argue that, given the weather conditions necessary to either sport, success in fishing depends more on the individual himself, who is not at the mercy of the many outside influences that so often occur to mar the other sport. The subject is an interesting one to discuss with an exponent of both.

[1] See p. 208.

2. THE NEWTON SIDE

CHAPTER XV

AUGUSTUS F. ROSS: SECOND MASTERSHIP, 1879–82

Mr. E. Fearnley Tanner hunts the Newton side 1878–9—"Dart and Teign Foxhounds"—Inadequate support—Afterwards keeps a private pack—Kennels at Hawson Court—Has a bad fall—Three good runs—Mr. Augustus Hingston hon. sec.—Mr. Ross again comes forward—Appointed master—No guarantee—Kennels at Ambrook—Arthur Mason huntsman—Philip Back returns as whipper-in—His subsequent career—Some runs—Hunt breakfast at Cockington Court—Some of the field—The pack visits Sir Henry Seale's old country: a good run and those who saw it—Personal recollections—Mr. Ross as a falconer—As a musician—Resignation—Offer of hounds—The Newton side claimed by the masters of the Haldon—Claim suspended and Mr. Hemming's offer accepted—Mr. Hemming's disappearance—The country reverts to Mr. Whidborne and Mr. Studd.

> "Adhesive by nature to hounds and the table
> He neither would leave while to stay he was able."
>
> (*A Party at Stover.*)

FOR the first season, 1878–9, after partition of the country, the Newton side was hunted by Mr. E. Fearnley Tanner, then living at Hawson Court, Buckfastleigh. At the meeting at which Mr. Tanner's offer to hunt the Newton side was first made it was proposed to call the pack "The Dart and Teign Foxhounds," and a circular inviting subscriptions was actually sent out under this title. Perhaps it was thought that the new pack on the Haldon side would assume the name "South Devon." At any rate, the "Dart and Teign" idea was dropped, and Mr. Tanner became master of the "South Devon."

In his modesty, Mr. Tanner tells me that his tenure of the mastership was neither long nor eventful enough to demand recognition. It is clear that it would have been longer had he received anything like adequate support, for after his resignation he continued to hunt for several years with a private pack of his own a country composed of loans from the Dartmoor and South Devon extending, roughly speaking, from Buckfastleigh to Princetown and from Cator to the river Avon. Mr. Tanner built kennels at Hawson Court. He hunted the pack himself until he broke his jaw in a fall on the last day of the year 1886, and his kennel-huntsman and whipper-in, Churchward, then took command until the end of the season. Of the sport shewn while the pack was a private one, three runs call for mention, viz. Shear Wood to ground at Ivybridge Viaduct; Langamarsh to Tavy Cleave; and Huntingdon Warren to Fox Tor and Rippon Tor. Mr. Augustus Hingston of Totnes acted as honorary secretary during Mr. Tanner's brief spell of office as master of the South Devon.

No sign of any successor to Mr. Tanner being forthcoming by the month of June, 1879, Mr. Ross, who was still living in the country, volunteered to hunt the Newton side. After some negotiations, he was appointed master without any guarantee, the committee undertaking to do its best to beat up subscriptions. These terms were renewed in the ensuing two seasons.

During this, his second term of office, Mr. Ross lived and kennelled his hounds at Ambrook, near Ipplepen. In the table of hunts in *Baily's Magazine*, the master is stated to be huntsman, but whatever may have been the intention before the season began,

it is clear that Arthur Mason hunted the pack from the opening day. Philip Back, who after his early experience with Mr. Ross had put in two years in private service and two more as kennel-huntsman and whip to Mr. Netherton's Harriers, returned to Mr. Ross as whipper-in. He remained for one season and then, after hunting the Modbury Harriers for three seasons, entered Mr. Calmady's service and developed into one of the best huntsmen in Devonshire.

The season opened on the 27th October, when the hounds met at Kingskerswell Arch. The Down, usually a sure find thanks to Mr. Hercules Brown of Barton Hall, was drawn blank, but a fox was found in Maddicott's Plantation which took the pack over Dainton Hill to Stoneycombe, where he turned to Bulleigh Barton and went on by Wrigwell to Brownston. The earths here being stopped, the fox skirted Coombe Fishacre and went to Wickaborough. Crossing the Totnes road by Red Post, the pack ran at a great pace to Lillypitt, thence to Waye Barton, where a sheepdog caused a check. Time, fifty minutes, the pace at times being terrific. Arthur very soon hit the line again, and they rattled him down the valley to Gatcombe Plantation, where they rolled him over.

On the 12th November the pack met at Ambrook, the Master's new residence, and the field numbered from ninety to a hundred. A cub was killed after half an hour's ringing run, and an old fox was found on Dainton Common. They rattled him over the hill to Bulleigh, where they turned to Compton, racing through Mr. Anthony's big fields, skirting Brownscombe, to Coombe. Ringing here a bit, and away for Ipplepen, and Ox Hill, they crossed the line

to Bow Grange, pointing for Staverton, where the fox ran them out of scent after an hour's good hunting run.

The hunt received much hospitality at this time, and on the 11th December Mr. Richard Mallock gave a hunt breakfast at Cockington Court, where a large field assembled. The coverts were unfortunately blank, though a drag was touched here and there; but from Berry Woods the hounds got away with a fox. The frost, however, made riding so dangerous that the master stopped the pack.

On the 15th from Wolston Green they had a capital fifty minutes with a fox found in Crick Brake which got to ground in Percombe Brake. Another was found in Gurrington Wood and went to earth in Hobbin.

From Kingskerswell, on February 7th, the hounds killed a fox in the open after a very sharp but twisting forty-eight minutes, the points touched being Coombe Fishacre, Wrigwell, Ipplepen, Berry, Marldon, Compton and Whiddon, the fox being killed between that place and Haccombe. The going was very heavy, and there was a great deal of jumping. Amongst those mentioned as in at the death were Colonel and Miss Ridley, Mr. and Mrs. Luxmoore, Messrs. J. Kitson, W. Clack, Casavetti, Studdy, Riley, Codner, Gibbons, Rendell and Dering.

At this time, that part of the country formerly hunted by Sir Henry Seale was not regularly hunted, but on March 11th Mr. Ross took his pack to Morley Toll Bar, and was met by a field of over a hundred horsemen. Finding in Storridge Moor and running over the earths at Newhouse, they turned to the left, and, going on to Highmarks, described a circle, and entered Storridge Wood. Here the pack divided,

several foxes being afoot, and, after a slow cold-scenting run of an hour and twenty minutes, the hunted fox was lost near Topsham Bridge. The hounds were then trotted off to some coverts on the right bank of the Avon above Gara Bridge, permission to draw which had been given by Admiral Parker, the master of the Dartmoor Hounds. After drawing two or three coverts blank (the Dartmoor Hounds having run through them, and killed a fox on the preceding Friday and Tuesday), the hounds were thrown into a young larch plantation at Clunkamoor, when almost immediately a fox was seen to slip out at the bottom. After being headed, he turned to the right, pointing for Blackhall, and the hounds raced away over some stiffly fenced grass fields on Bickham Farm; then leaving Huish village on the left, they sank the valley by the Parsonage and checked on the hill opposite Langford. On recovering the line, they ran over the Langford meadows, and, going over Butterford and Whetcombe (where the stiff fences stopped not a few of the field), faced the rising ground to Corswell, and, after entering Leigh Copse and running straight through Timber Wood, Hotall and Harts Wood, got on to some heavy plough-land near Blackdown, where scent failed. Time, one hour and ten minutes, with only two checks. Among those who stuck to the hounds and rode the whole run were the master, Miss Bidder, Captain Chichester and Messrs. Riley, G. Allen, Codner (Torquay), Hare, Arundel, J. Trist and a few others. Having regard to the nature of the country, and to the fact that it was strange to the huntsman, the day's sport seems to have been very satisfactory.

At the time I remember Mr. Ross, the hunt had come to rather a low ebb. One brilliant burst I

recall, when we ran a fox to ground on the railway embankment somewhere in the neighbourhood of Staverton. The circumstance of a very fast gallop over dusty fallows under a scorching March sun was one to make an impression on the mind of a youngster. At that time Mr. Ross generally rode a white-grey horse. One old hound, Chanticleer, would sit by his horse's heels while the pack was drawing, and when hounds spoke in cover he was a pretty safe guide as to whether it was right or not.

Mr. Ross was fond of the old-fashioned sport of falconry, which he followed on Haldon and other open places. He was also, like that celebrated sportsman Colonel Peter Hawker, a musician of no mean order, which doubtless accounted for his blowing an excellent note on the horn.

The hunt is indebted to Mr. Ross for twice stepping into the breach and keeping the sport alive. He gave up finally at the end of the season 1881–2; and when he did so, he offered to lend his pack and the use of his kennels to the country, or the pack alone, for a definite period; or, alternatively, to sell his hounds to any master that might succeed him, or to the committee. But as no successor was forthcoming, the Newton side, or southern portion of the South Devon country, was, as already stated,[1] claimed by Mr. J. Whidborne and Mr. E. F. Studd, who had then just agreed to take over jointly the Haldon side vacated by the first Baron Haldon (formerly Sir Lawrence Palk) and Sir John Duntze, but the claim was suspended when a new master, in the person of Mr. Hemming, was found for the Newton side.

Mr. Hemming was procured through an advertisement in the sporting papers, and his offer to hunt the

[1] See p. 137.

Newton side on £300 a year was accepted.[1] He had a great belief, as some people have, in the beneficial effects of salt water on hounds and used constantly to take the pack down to Paignton for a swim, which, it is said, cost him the loss of a couple of hounds by drowning. But before the time had come to begin cubhunting, the new master vanished. The Newton side accordingly reverted to Mr. Whidborne and Mr. Studd, who put in several days' cubhunting on that side.

[1] S.D.H. Minutes of Meetings.

CHAPTER XVI

JOHN WHIDBORNE: SECOND MASTERSHIP, 1882–5

Dissolution of partnership between Mr. Whidborne and Mr. Studd—Whidborne elects to hunt the Newton side—Kennels at Lidwell—Jack Whitmore engaged as huntsman—"Mr. Whidborne's Hounds"—Kennel and stable arrangements—Establishment—Early hours—No subscription—Mr. Hext and Mr. Rendell appointed honorary secretaries: their qualifications—A bitch pack—Individual hounds—A small pack—Long distances—A narrow shave—Whitmore as a huntsman—Scarcity of foxes—A case of riot—A good run in his first season—An improvement in the second season—A great run: change foxes with Mr. Bragg's—Other good runs—Miss Whidborne—Horses—Whips: Doyle; Edwards; Derges—William Paul: one of the old school—Pleasant memories—How the name "South Devon Hounds" was resumed—Whidborne resigns—Lord Haldon waives his claim to the country—Negotiations with Mr. C. Marshall—Dr. Gaye comes forward and is accepted.

> "All that we love or long for or regret
> We may resign, but never can forget."
> *(On looking back from Haldon for the last time on Stover*

AS stated in an earlier chapter,[1] the partnership between Mr. Whidborne and Mr. Studd came to a sudden and dramatic end on the opening day of their first season. Thereupon Mr. Whidborne decided to hunt the southern portion or Newton side of the country, leaving Mr. Studd to continue alone on the Haldon side. Accordingly, kennels were hurriedly fitted up at Lidwell, a farm in the valley under Haldon between Dawlish and Teignmouth owned by Mr. Whidborne, whither such of the hounds as belonged to him were transferred. Jack Whitmore, formerly with Mr. Froude Bellew, was engaged as hunts-

[1] See pp. 137, 139.

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MR. WHIDBORNE'S HOUNDS

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man, and drafts were procured from the Oakley and other packs. All this took time, and the season was fairly well advanced before a beginning could be made. The pack was called "Mr. Whidborne's Hounds" during his first two seasons, as the title "South Devon" had then already been adopted by the pack on the Haldon side.

Mr. Whidborne, with his daughter, Miss Whidborne, took up his residence for the season at his cottage, "Brookside," Kingsteignton, which he had used for many years as a hunting-box, renting the farmyard across the road for additional stabling. Here he kept his own and some of the hunt horses, the remainder being at his home, Gorway, at Teignmouth. This arrangement, with the kennels at Lidwell, as stated, a matter of five miles outside Whidborne's country, was an inconvenient one, and entailed much hard work, besides requiring more horses than would have been necessary if kennels and master's residence had been more centrally situated. At one time Mr. Whidborne kept seventeen horses, but these included a pair of carriage horses and his own hunters, besides those of Miss Whidborne and her groom. As the stable accommodation at Gorway and Brookside was insufficient, a range of wooden boxes was erected in a garden opposite the stable entrance to Gorway. I have known Whitmore leave his home on Brook Hill, in Teignmouth, at one o'clock in the morning to reach Spitchwick at five for cubhunting. He had first to walk half a mile to Gorway for his hack, ride two miles to Lidwell for his hounds, thence another four miles to Kingsteignton, where he changed on to his hunter, ultimately reaching Spitchwick when, as he used to put it, it was "just light enough to see the rabbit holes."

The whip had a better time as his journey usually began and finished at Kingsteignton, another man helping hounds to and from the kennels. Those days were less luxurious than these, and early hours were in vogue for cubhunting, which most people (except at the moment their alarum clocks go off) will agree is the better time of day.

During his first season, Whidborne hunted the country at his own expense without any subscription. The following season he stipulated for a subscription of three hundred pounds, but the sum paid him did not reach that figure, and he then decided to hunt the country another season (1884–5) at his own expense rather than put himself under obligation to the hunt.

In July, 1883, Mr. George H. Hext and Mr. Arthur S. Rendell, both of Newton Abbot, were appointed joint honorary secretaries. The hunt organization had practically dwindled to nothing since the Hemming fiasco, and the setting of things upon a proper footing once again was, as it always is in such cases, very uphill work. No better men, however, could have been chosen for the task than the two gentlemen named. Their personal popularity was great, and they were both very well known. Mr. Hext had a most pleasing way of extorting subscriptions, and Mr. Rendell's intimate acquaintance with the farmers in the hunt ensured their support and co-operation. Both were real sportsmen and instigated by a keen love of hunting, but time was necessarily required for their labours to produce fruit. The work of a hunt secretary is not done in the limelight, and no one will ever know the full extent of the advantage that accrued to the hunt from the appointment of Mr. Hext and Mr. Rendell to the secretaryship. The latter retired after six years' good work, but the

former remained in office for a period of over twenty years, and on retiring received a presentation, which will be mentioned in its proper place, and was elected chairman of the hunt committee, a position that he still occupies.

Mr. Whidborne decided to keep only a bitch pack, and, instead of breeding, to recruit its strength each year by the purchase of drafts. The pack at first consisted of hounds bought from Lord Portsmouth's, the Oakley, the Rufford, Mr. Coryton's, Mr. Froude Bellew's, the Dartmoor, the Fitzwilliam and other packs, and included a first-season hound that turned out well, called Wonderful, by the great Belvoir Weathergage, sire of the famous Gambler. Witchcraft, from Mr. Coryton's, was another young hound that turned out so good a hunter that she was kept on despite her riotous proclivities. Lavender, a good-looking daughter of Lord Portsmouth's Albion and a great favourite of Miss Whidborne's, Brunette by Lord Portsmouth's Vagabond, from Mr. Bellew's, and the red-pied Relish from the Tynedale were also good hounds. In fact, taking into consideration the circumstances attending its formation, the little pack was a most creditable one both in appearance and in the field.

Whitmore, who was a cousin of Tom Whitmore, the celebrated Oakley huntsman through whom each year some capital drafts were obtained, came of a first-rate hunting stock and thoroughly understood the art of getting hounds into condition. Every rib was visible, yet they were filled out over the loins, and their coats always looked well.

To hunt two days a week there were never more and often less than twenty-two couple in kennel, including young hounds, and the distances to and

from the various fixtures were almost always considerable and often very great. Such fixtures as Berry, Galmpton, Welstor Cross, Shinner's Bridge, Widdicombe, Staverton, Churston, Furzeleigh Mill and Spitchwick always meant tiring days and long journeys back to kennel. In many a ride home from such distant, and even more distant, places, often by moonlight, I have noticed that, with very few exceptions, the hounds came home with their sterns up, a great number keeping in front of their huntsman all the way. We were nearly run down one dark night by a brewer's dray coming at a great pace down the hill we were ascending. Whitmore, who heard the din of the approaching vehicle, saved the pack by whipping out his horn and blowing such a blast as terrified the driver into pulling up. Compliments were exchanged as we passed.

Born and bred, so to speak, in the kennel, Whitmore had all the qualities and the knowledge of an excellent huntsman. There was little he did not know about hounds and their various ailments, and in the field he was quick, observant and persevering. That was when he was at his best, but at times, despite his master's efforts, he was not to be relied upon. He was a good horseman, but lacked the powerful voice necessary in the deep woodlands of South Devon, and, as a consequence, he used his horn too much.

The sport, during the first year of Whidborne's mastership, was not brilliant. The country had been going down for two or three years; there had been no cubhunting; and, with no apparent prospect of the country being hunted, it is not to be wondered at that foxes were lamentably scarce. As was to be expected, there were many blank days, very harmful

to a newly-formed pack. On one occasion, after drawing well into the afternoon without finding, we were sitting on our horses, the half-dozen of us left, watching the pack draw Bagtor Mire. Presently, the hounds appeared to be running, though the wind was too high for us to hear if they were speaking, and Jack Whitmore, who was with us, did not stir or speak.—"What's that hound leading?" asked Mr. Whidborne. "That's Bridget, sir," was the answer. After a few moments the master again broke the silence with: "What are they running, Whitmore?" "*I think they are running that pony, sir*," came the reply. And the pony it was. With few foxes, and little "legitimate" riot on the moor, there was some excuse for the delinquents.

Nevertheless, the season was not entirely devoid of good runs. On the 24th February, 1883, after meeting at Heathfield Station, the pack struck a drag on Bovey Heathfield which took them into the Wilderness, where they found. They went away at a great pace over a heavy country with many banks, the line being through Coalsworthy Farm by Whisselwell and Owlacombe Plantations, on to Heytor Down, where the fox ran very cunning, past Heytor Rock and on through Holwell Farm. Here the fog was very thick, and we had to ride hard to keep the hounds in sight as they broke the wall by White Gate. From there our fox went on to Bonehill, just above Widdicombe, where he succeeded in finding a friendly crevice from which he could not be dislodged. The run lasted just over the hour, and the distance, as hounds ran, was stated to be about twelve miles. On the map, from point to point, it is just over six miles. Only five of the field in addition to the huntsman lived to see the finish, and the writer of the account

calls attention to the fact that they were all riding horses between fourteen and fifteen hands high.

In Whidborne's second season, things were much better. Foxes were more plentiful, the pack had been improved, the country well "summered" and the affairs of the hunt were in better working order. In those days the shooting difficulty was much less acute than it is to-day, and rabbit-trapping was not carried on in the wholesale way with which we have since grown familiar. The sport in the season 1883–4 was very good. Probably the best run in the whole of this mastership was that which occurred on the 14th February, 1884.

The pack met at New Inn and found in Rora, the fox first attempting to break over Ramshorn Down, where he was twice headed back into the covert. He then crossed the bottom and went away to Ilsington Town Wood and on by Ilsington Village and the Narracombe Bottom (where he was viewed some four hundred yards in front of the pack) to the Heytor Vale at a great pace. Here, in the small coverts and broken ground, he made a lot of work, but, without a word from their huntsman, the hounds carried the line on to the open moor beyond, bearing at first to the right as if Yarner was the fox's point. But he was a moorman and a traveller, and, turning outward again and disdaining the Rubble Heap, he crossed the Leighon Valley to Hound Tor Rocks and Swannerton Gate at a clipping pace, only a few of the field being able to keep the pack in sight. From here the line lay over Heatree Down and through Heathercombe Brake on to Hamildown, where Mr. Bragg's hounds were seen running on the left, and so by King Tor and over Shapeley Common to Moor Gate. Crossing the road, hounds ran on across

Jesson to Fernworthy and over Middleton Hill, overlooking Chagford, pointing for Gidleigh. Here the first check occurred, the fox having been met at the entrance to a farmyard by the farmer's wife, who, exclaiming, "Here's a young fox!" set the sheepdog at him. A holloa a few fields ahead set matters right for the moment, but the sheepdog had done the customary mischief, and though hounds stuck well to the line as far as the hamlet of Thorn, the fox's life was saved by the over-eagerness of the country people there, who caused confusion by holloaing in different places at the same time. Whitmore's horse was "done," as were also those of his eight or ten companions, and in addition had lost a shoe. The point was said to be about fifteen miles and the time about two hours and a half up to the moment of giving up. Miss Whidborne, on Silvertail, and Mrs. Splatt saw this gallant run from find to finish.

The pack undoubtedly changed foxes on Hamildown, and it was the opinion of many that Mr. Bragg killed Mr. Whidborne's fox and that Mr. Whidborne's hounds went on with Mr. Bragg's fox which was fresher.

Shinner's Bridge fixtures provided two or three good runs in this season. One was a two-hours' hunt from Penny's Grove to Berry, the first hour being very good. Another fox was found in Berry the same day and killed after an hour's run. Another day, after meeting at Shinner's Bridge, a fine run resulted with a fox from North Wood. He first went down by the river Dart to within about a mile of Totnes, then turned back and crossed the road at Shinner's Bridge. He then made for Hood Copse, through which he passed, and ran the road under Velwell House and never left it until within a few fields of Luscombe

Wood, giving us a gallop of about a mile and a half on the road as hard as horses could go. Here, he turned to the left, and, after crossing the vale at Willing, made straight for the village of Dean, where we were close to him. From there he made over the hill to within a field of Dean Wood, where, as bad luck would have it, he got to ground dead-beat close before the hounds. Time, one hour and a half.

During her father's mastership Miss Whidborne, who had hunted regularly ever since Mr. Westlake first kept the hounds, took a very keen interest in the hunt and in the pack, and was of great assistance to her father, who was not always able to be out. Not that she asserted her position in the field, except upon occasion, as, for instance, when the huntsman would be disposed to kill a fox on the earth which she considered should be given a chance. But she was always there to be consulted if necessary and to exercise a moral control upon hunt servants and field alike; and, knowing as she did all about the sport, the country and the people, she could always be relied on to give a clear and accurate account of what had taken place. She was a good rider and had a good eye herself for a country, besides having an excellent attendant in the person of her groom, John Croot, whose hawk-like eye has been known to view a fox as it crossed the narrow space of an open gateway a couple of fields distant.

Of course, Miss Whidborne was well mounted. In the likeness of her given here, she is mounted on Killeen, an Irish hunter of good stamp and quality, and a great favourite of hers. Then there was the grey, Shamrock, also Irish, to my mind one of the best types of hunter I have seen, though perhaps a trifle big about the head; but full of knowledge and

MISS WHIDBORNE

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a first-rate horse over banks and timber, and you could not tire him out. I had him after he turned roarer from a bad attack of influenza, but his owner would not sell him. He appears on the left in the photograph of Mr. Whidborne's hounds. Silvertail was another of Miss Whidborne's good horses, and the bay Talisman was one of the best she had. Paddy was an extraordinarily hard little horse. He suffered from corns and had a quick pottering action on the road. Then there was Taffy, somewhat coarse, but of the everlasting kind. I am treating only of the hunters Miss Whidborne had at this time, but cannot refrain from just mentioning a very celebrated grey mare she rode in earlier years called Alice Grey. Some of the horses named were reserved for Miss Whidborne's own riding, but others took their turn in carrying the huntsman, who was always well mounted. Among other horses he had were the chestnuts Sunbeam and Ginger; the greys Swallow, Rattler and Zouave (the latter split his pastern trotting down a lane); the brown mare Polly; The Knight, a bay; the rat-tailed Baron, a good hunter of uncertain temper; and a horse whose proper name I forget, but which the stablemen always called Chany-eye from his having a so-called "china" or "wall eye." There were also others that I forget.

The whip first appointed to the pack was one Doyle, grandson to the master's old coachman and stud-groom, William Paul. His heart, however, was not in the work and he was relegated to the position of second horseman to the huntsman. This he filled admirably, having a good eye for a country. Doyle was succeeded by a whip who, if I remember rightly, was called Edwards and came from the Llangibby and Chepstow, but his health was not good and he

could not stand the long days. Then William Derges, who, as mentioned, had whipped in to Westlake, was taken on.

The William Paul mentioned above was a valuable servant to Mr. Whidborne, being a good man on or about a horse and not afraid of work. He had some bad falls with young horses, having once been as near breaking his neck as is possible without being killed. He lay in bed for many weeks afterwards and his head was never again straight, but he completely recovered and years afterwards, when over seventy, broke his thigh through a horse coming back on him. He was also one of the old breed of coachmen who could hit a horse from the box in the proper place and with the proper effect. These hard-hitters of the old school did not indulge in the perpetual slashing-all-over of modern drivers; they seldom hit a horse, but when they did they hit him once and to some purpose.

Mr. Whidborne was over sixty years of age when he undertook this, his second, mastership. He applied himself to the duties of the position with all the ability and all the thoroughness that had characterized him in his business. Besides being excellently mounted, the men were well turned out, and no necessary expense was spared, though there was no ostentation or "swagger" about the establishment.

Mr. Whidborne was very generous in mounting his friends, as my eldest brother and I have reason to remember. He was also very hospitable, and a "mount" usually involved breakfast and often dinner at Brookside. His breakfast hour was eight o'clock and, as he had strict views on the subject of punctuality, one had to be early astir to hack out the five miles and not be late. Sometimes he would tell

you to take care of the horse he mounted you on; at others, his orders were to "ride that horse's tail off," which was only his pleasant way of telling you to ride as hard as you pleased. If one was riding his own horse and not dining at Brookside, there was always gruel for the hunter and something, usually sherry and biscuits, for the rider at any hour. Whidborne belonged to the sherry age and had some excellent wine, and his sherry-glasses would have satisfied some claret drinkers. Little time was spent in refreshment on those occasions, as one was generally riding home with hounds. The scene in the yard was a busy one: men with lanterns leading off tired hunters or bringing out fresh horses for huntsman and whip, who swallowed *saucers* of hot tea where they stood ready on their mounting-blocks, with the pack around them. Perhaps I dwell unduly upon these details: if so, my excuse must be that it is difficult to pass over in silence scenes that live in the memory and circumstances small in themselves, but which led to the establishment of a custom, persevered in for eight-and-twenty years, of never passing Brookside after hunting on that side of the country without availing oneself of the welcome that was ever ready; a custom that ceased only on the death of Miss Whidborne, that good sportswoman and kindest of friends, who had taken up her residence permanently at Brookside after the death of her father in 1890.

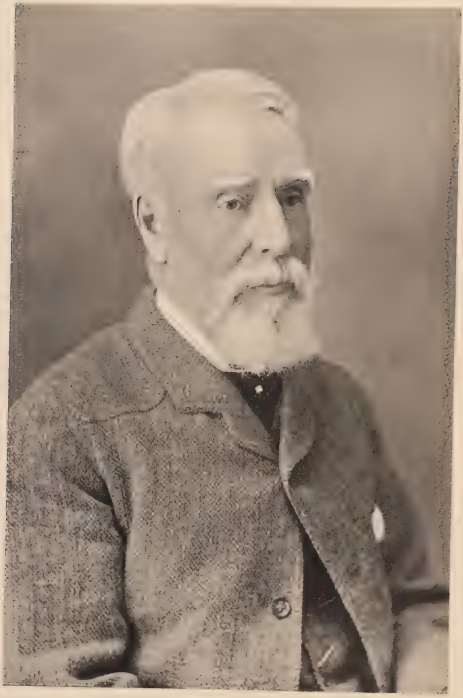
In Whidborne's last season, 1884–5, the pack resumed the name of "The South Devon" under the following circumstances:—

The first Lord Haldon having died in 1883, his eldest son, on succeeding to the title, expressed a desire to take on the pack then hunting the Haldon side. Accordingly Mr. Studd resigned in his favour

in 1884, and, as the pack was then to be called "Lord Haldon's Hounds,"[1] Mr. Whidborne was at liberty to resume the title of "South Devon."

Towards the end of Whidborne's term of office, he having made it clear that he would not continue after the close of the season 1884–5, the committee applied to Lord Haldon to know whether he was prepared, in accordance with the arrangement referred to in an earlier chapter,[2] to take over the southern portion of the country. On his stating that he could not undertake more than a part of it, the committee decided to advertise for a master, as a result of which advertisement negotiations were entered into with Mr. C. Marshall of Swymbridge, in North Devon. Before these negotiations matured, however, Dr. H. S. Gaye of Newton Abbot came forward with an offer to take over the country, which was immediately accepted.

[1] See p. 152. [2] See p. 127.



DR. H. S. GAYE

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CHAPTER XVII

DR. HENRY SEARLE GAYE: 1885-93

Prosperous state of the country—A successful reign—Major-General Gaye—Brigade-Surgeon A. C. Gaye: well known as a gentleman rider—Terms of mastership—Mr. Whidborne presents his pack to the committee—Kennels at North End, Ipplepen—New kennels built at Pulsford Hills, Denbury—Part of the moor country claimed by Bragg—Claim renewed by Mr. Norton and Mr. Thomas—Arbitrated upon in 1890—New regulations: the "receipt" button; capping—Hunt uniform—Mr. A. S. Rendell retires from the secretaryship—Succeeded by Mr. H. S. Wright, who subsequently resigns—Jack Whitmore leaves—Replaced by James Collings—Prejudice against a harrier huntsman overcome—A presentation to Collings—His personality: in the field; in the kennel—Master and man combine to raise the fortunes of the hunt—Dr. Gaye as master—An unfortunate accident—Good sport—Mr. D. Scratton and his keeper, Bishop—Mr. W. Rendell: his descriptive account of three notable runs—Dr. Gaye resumes possession of the Haldon side vacated by Mr. Studd—His resignation—His popularity recognized by a dinner and presentation—A graceful act.

> "Old friends long gone again appear,
> Their welcome voice we seem to hear;
> And shadows from the wall depart,
> As early sunshine warms the heart."
>
> (*Dartmoor Days.*)

THE fortunes of the hunt on the Newton side, which had sunk to a low ebb during the second mastership of Mr. Ross, received a fresh impulse under the guidance of Mr. Whidborne, who did the thing efficiently and well and pulled the hunt together, so that when Dr. Gaye succeeded, he had the advantage of the previous three seasons' nursing and careful working up of the country. The Doctor made the most of this advantage, and with an improved organization the hunt was put upon a better and

more businesslike footing than it had ever occupied since the pack became a subscription one. New kennels were built, the committee was strengthened, a sub-committee was appointed to look after minor details, and a proper damage fund was established.

The master was a thorough sportsman and very popular, and the sport he shewed was consistently good and often brilliant. As a result, the fields increased in number and the subscription list in amount. The Doctor's mastership was an unqualified success.

Dr. Gaye was one of three brothers, all of whom distinguished themselves in their respective careers. The eldest was Major-General Gaye, who lived at Tor Newton, and with his daughter, Miss Gaye, hunted regularly with the pack. The youngest was Brigade-Surgeon A. C. Gaye, who, under the racing name of "Mr. Herbert," was for more than twenty years one of the best known and most successful gentlemen-riders in India, where he won many good races both on the flat and across country and performed some remarkable feats of endurance in the saddle, covering great distances to enable him to indulge his passion for race riding.[1]

Dr. Gaye himself had for many years been in active practice as a medical man at Newton Abbot and was well known in the district. He was one of the oldest members of the South Devon Hunt and was well past middle age when he took on the hounds.

The terms agreed upon between the new master and the committee were: a guaranteed subscription of £450 and the committee to pay all gratuities to

[1] An interesting account of his racing career appeared on the 6th August, 1887, in the *Civil and Military Gazette* published at Lahore.

keepers and earth-stoppers, as well as all claims for poultry and other damage.

Mr. Whidborne, in addition to giving a handsome subscription, lent his bitch pack to the committee, and at the end of the season 1887–8 the loan was converted into a gift upon certain conditions which were accepted. The pack was kennelled at North End, Ipplepen, for the first three seasons, but at the end of his second season Gaye impressed upon the committee the desirability of having kennels of its own or, at any rate, held for a substantial length of term. Accordingly, in the early part of 1888, certain sites were inspected, and that of the now existing kennels at Pulsford Hills, Denbury, was selected. A lease for twenty-one years was secured, and the buildings which stood on the land were altered and converted into kennels, stables and a huntsman's cottage at an original estimated cost of £190, the figure being considerably lower than it would otherwise have been through the sportsmanlike action of Messrs. John Wright and Son of Newton Abbot, who undertook to do all the carting of materials free of cost. There was considerable delay on the part of the contractor; certain work had to be done over again owing to bad workmanship, and, in addition, there were the inevitable extras. The cost was defrayed out of a special "whip-up" among the subscribers. The lease of these kennels has been renewed, and they are still occupied by the hunt.

At the very outset of his career as master, Gaye was troubled by a claim to a portion of the moor country set up by Mr. George Bragg of Moretonhampstead. The claim was maintained by Mr. Norton of Chagford, who succeeded to the mastership of Mr. Bragg's pack, and by Mr. Norton's

successor, Mr. S. V. Thomas. This caused a good deal of trouble at the time, but was ultimately, in 1890, settled by the arbitrament of the M. F. H. Association. An outline of the controversy is given in a separate chapter.[1]

In the year 1888 the minimum subscription for members was fixed at £3 3s. and a regulation was introduced, which had been proposed the previous year but then rejected, that every member of the hunt whose subscription was paid should receive a stud or button, to be worn in the hunting-field to distinguish him there as a member of the hunt and to exempt him from capping, which practice the committee had been compelled to adopt. A galloping fox was first proposed for the design of this button, but ultimately a fox's mask was adopted. The idea, however, of the "receipt" button never found favour, and the wearing of the button very soon fell into disuse.

About this time a new coat button was also instituted. It consisted of a convex brass button with a raised monogram formed of the letters S.D.F.H. It was also decided to adopt a distinctive collar to be worn with the pink coat, and, after some discussion, a buff collar was agreed upon. The buff collar endures to this day, though it has not been adopted by all members. An evening-dress uniform, consisting of a scarlet coat and white waistcoat, was also assumed.

In the year 1888 Mr. A. S. Rendell, to the regret of all, withdrew from the position of joint honorary secretary after six years' service, owing to pressure of business, but he has never ceased to take an active interest in the affairs of the hunt, in which he has been most helpful. He was succeeded by Mr. H. S.

[1] See chapter XVIII.

Wright, who joined Mr. Hext, the continuing honorary secretary. Mr. Wright, in consequence of other calls on his time, only held the office until 1889, tendering his resignation in August of that year, leaving Mr. Hext to carry on the duties single-handed.

Mr. Whidborne's former huntsman, Jack Whitmore, was taken on and hunted the pack for the Doctor's first season. At the end of it the master's patience was exhausted and he left. Gaye was at some loss to replace him, but ultimately his eye fell upon James Collings, then in his twelfth season as huntsman to the South Pool Harriers, of which Captain Hallifax was master. I believe Mr. Parnell Tucker of Ashburton was chiefly instrumental in directing the master's attention to Collings. Captain Hallifax readily consented to Dr. Gaye's approaching Collings, saying that, although he could not replace him, he would not stand in the way of any man's promotion from harriers to foxhounds.

The Doctor, like most foxhunters, was prejudiced against a harrier huntsman for foxhounds,[1] but what he saw and heard of Collings convinced him that the man was above the average and that he had not only the necessary qualifications but also the sense and ability to adapt himself and his methods to hunting the fox. Collings was accordingly engaged, and the result amply justified his selection.

On his leaving the South Pool Harriers, he was presented, in June, 1886, with a testimonial consisting of a purse of £31 and a silver horn. The presenta-

[1] It is perhaps not generally known that Frank Gillard, the celebrated Belvoir huntsman and a Devonshire man, began his career as huntsman to a pack of harriers in North Devon.

tion was made on behalf of the South Pool by Mr. Augustus Hingston of Totnes, a well-known member of both hunts.

Collings was then about thirty-five years of age. In the hunting field he was reserved in manner, short and even brusque with strangers or those he did not know well. He made up his mind what to do, and did it, regardless of information that he could not trust and advice that he did not want. In this way he gradually ceased to be troubled with the well-intentioned "assistance" of members of the field. Often have I heard the remark from farmers and others: "What a man he is, to be sure!" when Collings, receiving a communication in silence, proceeded to act as if it had not been made. But these very people learnt to appreciate the determination that characterized the man and his reliance upon his hounds and upon his own judgment. His whole heart was in the sport, and his mind, concentrated on the work in hand, would not brook distraction. A few, a very few, whose knowledge of hunting *and of individual hounds* he could rely upon, would be listened to; even then, if he had a move in his own mind, he would often make it before acting on the information received.

But when off duty, or when once well away with his fox, he would be as cheery as a schoolboy. He had a dry humour of his own and a keen appreciation of humour in others. Once, he took us off to a holloa on the top of a distant hill, where we found a small boy in a newly-sown field. To the two questions: "Did you holloa?" and "Have you seen the fox?" came in succession the answers: "Yes," and "No." Collings said not another word, but turned back in the face of the grinning field, and his sense of

humour certainly came to his assistance on that occasion.

I think it will be admitted that Collings turned out to be one of the best Devonshire huntsmen known in modern times. He was never at a loss, and you never saw him hesitate. Everything was done with system and regularity; he never went over the same ground twice, either in drawing or in casting; and he never deceived his hounds. He would give them plenty of time before making his cast. I have seen him more than once, with a catchy scent, link up, as it were, by a series of good casts, a succession of bursts into quite a tolerable run. At other times, he would sit still and never touch the pack, knowing he could not help them. One of such occasions was in the course of a run which took us through the small enclosures close to Ashburton. Collings said to me: "This is a funny fox: you never know, when he goes into a field, where he is going to leave it. I daren't touch them." The fox was dawdling some way in front of the hounds, aware, apparently, that scent was too bad for them to overhaul him.

Now and again, but very seldom, he would make a back cast that people attributed to his harrier novitiate. I think it was oftener due to other causes, as in one particular instance that recurs to me at the moment. The hounds had just reached the moor and checked there, those of the field who were up being in an adjoining enclosure immediately below the pack and separated from it by the boundary wall. As Collings came up, the hounds, in casting, swung themselves down the hill and broke the wall into the field where we were, and he first held them on in that direction, which was "back." Everyone thought that the fox, as was the fact, had gone to moor; and

so did Collings, as I learnt afterwards. He then accounted for the curious turn of the hounds by the fact of their having heard us on the other side of the wall, and so turned towards the horses; but it deceived him for the moment and led him to think the fox might have turned short back.

There are moments, too, when every huntsman, on the principle of " the other Tom Smith's " celebrated all-round-my-hat cast, will make a *very* short backward cast first with the sole object of making a wider one for'ard than he would otherwise dare to do. Some people cannot distinguish between such cases and the instinctive try-back of the hare-hunter.

Collings's patience was equalled by his perseverance, and the keynote of the whole was his innate love of hunting. He would never leave off as long as there was a chance of hunting up to his fox; he was always trying, and never resorted to the proceeding of " working out the day."

He was also an extraordinarily hard man. When the first bad outbreak of influenza occurred—I think it was in or about the year 1891, when so many prominent people, including the Duke of Clarence, were carried off—several hunts which had no understudy to their huntsman, and some that had, were compelled to stop hunting through the staff being laid low. Collings got it, and a pretty bad attack; but he did not miss a single day's hunting. On another occasion, with a cold so bad that he could not speak above a whisper, he insisted on coming out, and the field grumbled because " Collings was so beastly quiet " ! Yet another time, he hunted hounds with a broken collar-bone and his arm in a sling.

His hound language was good, and he had a capital voice and a good note on the horn. You could

COLLINGS WITH HARBINGER AND STRIPLING

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always tell by his horn exactly what hounds were doing.

A light weight, he was a fearless rider and a good horseman. But he never rode for effect: his only idea being to get to his hounds. If he could not ride over a place, he would dismount, and, as we term it, turn his horse over it, a feat requiring considerable agility when a man is alone, as a huntsman so often is. Fearsome, indeed, were some of the places he got over in this way, and one or two of the horses he rode, Old Port and Triangle for example, were extraordinarily clever at this work. He was very good on boggy ground, going, and keeping above ground, where no one else cared to follow, and remarkably quick in getting about. In this, his promptness of decision and his knowledge of the country helped him enormously.

That he was as good in the kennel as in the field was abundantly proved by the stamp of hounds composing the pack, steady hunters with plenty of drive, and by the condition which enabled them to stand such long days as they had, and to come again as frequently as they did. For, even when hunting three days a week with a very frequent bye day in addition, as Gaye did later on, he never had more than thirty-seven and a half couple in kennel including the young entry.

With such a huntsman, who was also absolutely steady and trustworthy, the master's lot was a much happier one than it had been during his first season; and, though Dr. Gaye superintended all details of the kennel establishment and of the hunt in general, and by his ability and popularity prepared the way for the actual operations in the field, yet it is only fair to say that to his huntsman was due, in a very

large measure, the high standard of excellence of the sport that marked his reign. Thus the credit for raising the fortunes of the hunt may be said to have been shared by master and man, for not alone could either the genial personality of the master or the sport shewn by the huntsman have effected the improvement in the status of the hunt that together they brought about.

Although master in the field in fact as well as in name, Gaye had a happy way with him that made everyone anxious to do as he wished. Now and then he would have occasion to administer a severe reprimand to his field or to some individual, but he had a way of doing even that, and his language never exceeded a few accepted expletives. Sometimes the offender, catching the unconcerned expression of only one of the Doctor's eyes, *a glass one*, would be taken quite by surprise. His anger was not easily roused, and was quickly appeased. Yet he could be very angry, and he once emphasized his remarks with his hunting crop on the shoulders of the culprit he was rebuking. This reminds me that I had the misfortune accidentally to knock out the Doctor's last front tooth with my hunting crop, a heavy cherry-wood thing. The pack was baying at an earth in thick undergrowth and the master had just pulled out the terrier, covered with red earth, which the hounds mistook for the fox. Rating and laying about me with my cherry-wood, I saw the Doctor suddenly drop the terrier and turn away with his hand to his face, and, when the din subsided, he told me what had happened. The dear old man was not at all angry, though the blow evidently gave him much pain. He only asked me to say nothing about it and then, taking off his hunting cap, gave me a cigar

from the reserve he always carried in its lining. He was a tremendous smoker.

The following extract from a letter that Mr. Arthur Rendell wrote to me in February, 1887, when I was away in London, is an index of the sport at this time. He writes: "We have been having clipping sport of late.

"On the 29th January: Raced into a fox in eight minutes in the Dartmoor country, earthed another and wound up with a run of an hour and a half and called off in the dark.

"On the 1st February: Found a fox on Hamildon Down: thirty-five minutes, earthed and killed. Finished up with three-quarters of an hour in Buckland.

"On Saturday last: One hour and ten minutes without a check and killed. Fifty-five minutes with another, racing pace without a check, when we changed foxes just as we were running into our hunted one. This was the best thing of the season. Washington Singer, on Cora, done to a turn, and many others pumped; spills by the dozen, and J. J. Cross on Mr. Whidborne's Swallow came a nice turn over a fence into a ditch full of Ogwell clay and water. Out of a field of eighty, only about fifteen at the finish. I mustn't tell you any more of the good things or you'll get discontented with your lot. . . ."

The said Swallow was a grey mare that could jump well enough. Sometimes, however, like Mrs. Dombey, she refused to make an effort.

So consistently good was the sport under this master that it would be impossible to pick out the best for special mention. In particular, the sport in the in-country was extraordinarily good. For this thanks were due in a large measure to Mr. Daniel Scratton of Ogwell, some time master of one of the

Essex packs, but who had long since given up hunting himself. He and his keeper, Bishop, proved that the fox and pheasant problem was capable of solution, for never were coverts better stocked with both than those at Ogwell, and a day in the Denbury country in those days invariably resulted in a good day's sport.

But if a detailed review of the many good runs that took place in the Doctor's eight years of mastership is not practicable, there are three, of which Mr. "Willie" Rendell has sent me particulars, which deserve a place here, and I should preface his account with the remark that Mr. Rendell was officially connected with the hunt for nineteen seasons, during thirteen of which he was honorary secretary to the Damage Fund and during the other six of which he hunted the pack under Mr. Singer's mastership. At the time of which he writes, he was living near the kennels, and, being a frequent visitor, knew every hound. He was also one of Collings's "trusted few."

Hunting men are rather given to picking and choosing popular fixtures instead of taking the days as they come when able to do so. This is a mistake, if only on the principle that decided a certain old gentleman of my acquaintance, and somewhat of a *bon vivant*, to dine in the middle of the day "because, sir, life is so uncertain." All three of the runs referred to were from the huge hanging woodlands of Buckland, on the banks of the Dart, the fixture being in every case Welstor Cross. All three runs ended with blood, and Mr. Rendell has the brush of one of the foxes, the mask of another and a pad of the third.

"I. 1888, *December 11th.*—Collings had his fox afoot under Ausewell Rock within ten minutes of throwing off. After taking a turn over the rock and the deep heather that surrounds it, the fox sank the Buckland Woods almost to the

road at Holne Bridge, where he was headed (or changed his mind) and, turning, again passed Ausewell Cottage and the heather where he was found, and broke across the Ashburton—Chagford road, the pack chiming merrily through the deep woodland of Borough Wood and up the Pensland Valley almost to Cold East Cross, just short of which he crossed the Woodland—Widdicombe road into Halshanger Mire. Here, on the open moor, the pace improved, and the pack drove along by the wall, pointing for Rippon Tor, but broke left-handed close to the Logan Rock, crossed the Chagford road, and ran through Newhouse Mire to Bonehill Rocks and Chinkwell Tor. Then, dropping down the Widdicombe Valley to Stone Gorse, the hounds regained the open moor on Hamildown, the horses being put to it to live with them, and crossed Wood Pitt and the deep gullies between that and Heathercombe Brake. Here the work was cut out by Platoff (a Haldon Samson dog) and little Heroine (the smallest hound in the pack) from the Old Berks. Platoff was a coarse dog about the neck and shoulders, and old Collings shouted to me as we galloped along together (there was no one else within hail) to ' look at little Heroine and that great lumbering brute ! '

" The pack raced along *outside* Heathercombe and on past Coombe Farm to Lower Hookner Farm and Shapley Farm, and killed in the garden of Puddavin Cottage, close to Beetor Cross and nearly at Moor Gate. The hounds made a great mess of the cottager's cabbages, but the delighted master compensated him so handsomely as to make him wish for another visit.

" From Holne Bridge to Beetor Cross is 8½ miles *by a rule on the map*. As hounds ran, I should say it was quite fourteen. Time one hour and forty-five minutes. Hounds had practically no assistance from find to finish.

" II. The second of these runs took place a month later, early in January, 1889. Found in Buckland Wood and took a turn in cover ; then away over the open moor by Buckland Beacon to Newhouse Mire, Rippon Tor and through Bagtor Mire. Here the fog is very bad and we miss the pack. I remark : ' I *think* I hear them on our left.' Collings thinks

they have turned right, down the bog to Bagtor Wood, and is worried. He shouts to me : ' Damme ! *thinking* won't do, Master Willie, *are you sure ?* ' At that moment, a tail hound, old Raglan (by Belvoir Dashwood—Their Ruin), comes along and confirms my statement that hounds are left-handed, and away we sail again (only the two of us there) to Heytor Rock, past ' No. 1 ' quarry, and along the whole length of Heytor Down to Yarner. We go through Yarner Wood at a hand gallop, then on to Pullabrook, over the Bovey river to Ridge Wood, across the Lustleigh railway and kill our fox on the top of Knowle Hill, on the Chudleigh side of Lustleigh village. One curious feature of the run was the pace at which hounds pushed their fox through Yarner Wood, and another was that in the last fence, where they caught the fox, the poor brute put his foot in a trap, and I was nearly kicked in the head by a frightened horse in consequence. As I threw the gin over the hedge and jumped quickly after it, the horse smelt the fox and let fly, and I saw his shoes flash in front of my face. The point was said at the time to be nine miles. I forgot the time, but believe it was very little over the hour.

" III. The third run took place on the 6th March, 1889, in the afternoon. The pack had killed a fox in the morning without much sport and with no scent.

" The run started from Lizwell Wood, which forms the extreme northern end of the chain of woodlands around Buckland and belonged then to the Misses Carew ; it is now the property of Colonel W. E. T. Bolitho. The fox—a vixen —was found in the clitter above Webburn Meet ' under the old holly bush,' where Bill French, the Spitchwick keeper, said they would find. The pack settled to the line, recrossed the river Webburn to Buckland and checked just under Buckland Court. Collings persevered, and recovered the line, and again the pack recrossed the valley and river to Lizwell Wood. Old Dr. Gaye and I watched them from the Buckland side, and decided not to follow, as scent seemed still very poor. But when I saw the hounds freshen up and cross the West Webburn to Black Tor and run *through* Leusden churchyard, on the opposite side of the valley, I wished the Doctor good-bye and went helter-skelter down to

and across the river and up the other side to Leusden School. There I heard that hounds had gone over Corndon Tor, pointing for Dartmeet, with Mr. Fearnley Tanner, 'Sol' Tozer and Collings in attendance. They turned right-handed on Corndon Tor and came down by Corndonford Farm and on past Lower Cator to Blackaton Manor (where I caught sight of them after bucketing *on the road* from Leusden School to Pondsworthy and Corndon Farm, galloping inside the circle), through Blackaton Newtake to Hamildown Beacon, across Coal Mires and along the side of Hamildown above Bag Park, where Sol Tozer's horse, old Greybird, rolled over with him, quite pumped. We had not hunted for a fortnight on account of snow on the ground. I had kept my horse, Badger, in wind by a gallop twice a week in a foot of snow, and he was as fit as a fiddle. When we came to the big wall on the top of Blackaton Newtake, we found it buried in snow with the exception of about a foot at the top. I led my horse over, and we both got the right side at the expense of a roll. The pack ran on to Wood Pitts and Natsworthy Gate, where I caught Collings, and thence across Heytree Down to Hayne Down and sank the valley by Hound Tor Farm to Leighon Gate, and the fox ran the road to old Tom Winser's at Beckaford, where hounds checked for the first time since leaving covert. Collings fumbled with his horn as if about to handle hounds, and then, in a sort of aside partly to himself and partly to me, muttered: 'Damme! Master Willie. I don't know where he has gone—I'll leave 'em alone!' As he said the words, the pack hit off the line out of the road, carried it over the fence right-handed above Leighon House and along over Smallacombe Rocks, where they were at fault again. Collings asked me to push on and keep an eye for'ard, and, luckily, I was in time to see Prior (by the Belvoir Proctor—Their Gossip) pick up the line towards Holwell Tor. A holloa to Collings, and the pack was racing on, hackles up, to Holwell Tor, where we heard the hounds baying round a corner of the tor. I jumped off to run (the ground, as you know, is not choice!).[1] 'Damme!' said Collings. 'I shall ride all the way,' and he tried to, but his horse, old

[1] The ground around the tor is thickly strewn with granite rocks.

C.B., *alias* Triangle, came down and stepped on Collings' foot. Meanwhile, I had slipped in to the hounds and found they had killed, and not run to ground as we thought. We picked up the mask, brush and one pad. It was then 4.55, and we had found at 3.30. Old Derges turned up, carrying Teaze the terrier; and later on Sol Tozer arrived and had the mask. I still have the brush, a wretched mean looking one. It was a little vixen, barren of course.

"I always say that, from my point of view, considering the bad start I had, etc., it was the most satisfactory run I ever rode. But I do not rank it as quite in the same class as my Eastdon Tor—Batworthy run."[1]

Towards the end of the season 1890–1 Dr. Gaye formally tendered his resignation, but eventually withdrew it on the understanding the subscription should be raised from £450 to £600.

In the month of May, 1891, Mr. Studd, who had been hunting the Haldon side of the country—his pack was then known as the "South Devon (Exeter Division)"—definitely retired.[2] Meetings were held in Exeter, at one of which the chairman, Mr. J. H. Ley of Trehill, explained that, under the arrangements entered into when the country was first divided, it was open to Dr. Gaye, if he chose to do so, to claim the Haldon side of the country vacated by Mr. Studd. Dr. Gaye then formally announced his intention of hunting the reunited country five days a fortnight, giving one day a week at least to the Haldon side, provided a subscription from that side of £300 a year was forthcoming. If the subscription should not reach that figure, he would hunt the Haldon side as and when he could, according to the amount actually subscribed.

As a matter of fact, Gaye proceeded to hunt the

[1] In Mr. Singer's mastership. See p. 256.

[2] See p. 172.

whole country three and four days a week during the next two seasons, and was as successful on the Haldon side as on the Newton side. The addition of the Haldon side was, however, from its character as well as from its distance from kennel, a severe tax upon men, hounds and horses, and, moreover, it was found impossible to meet even the modest demands of the master in the way of subscriptions. Having once reunited the country, the Doctor was not disposed to relinquish a part of it, which he considered would not be fair or to the interests of the hunt. Accordingly, at the end of the season 1892–3, he definitely resigned, and the hunt set about finding another master.

So great was the popularity of the retiring master, and such had been the sport shewn, that the members readily came forward with a handsome subscription towards a presentation to him, which took the form of a pair of guns by Holland & Holland bearing the inscription : " Presented to H. S. Gaye, Esqre., by the members of the Hunt on his retirement from the Mastership of the South Devon Hunt in 1893."

The presentation was made at a dinner given to the retiring master, and it is typical of the man, that, in returning thanks, he attributed much of the credit for the success of the hunt to the excellent services of its honorary secretary, Mr. G. H. Hext, and then, leaving his place, went round the table and handed " on his own " to Mr. Hext a handsome silver cup as a mark of his appreciation of the assistance he had always received from him.

CHAPTER XVIII

TERRITORIAL DIFFERENCES AND AN ARBITRATION

An arbitration by the M. F. H. Association: the South Devon and Mr. Thomas's (Mid-Devon)—Complaint by Mr. Ross of Mr. Bragg's Harriers—Mr. Fearnley Tanner—Protests from successive masters—An intolerable situation—Ill-feeling between the two hunts—An unacceptable offer from Mr. Bragg—The question referred to the M. F. H. Association—Requirements of hunting law to the acquisition of new country—Grounds of claim against the South Devon—The South Devon answer—Value of licence from the Duchy of Cornwall—Evidence in support of South Devon case—Text of the Award: the country hunted by Mr. Thomas solely South Devon country—Grounds of decision—The Award accepted in a sportsmanlike spirit—Temporary arrangements for loan of country to Mr. Thomas—The arrangements consolidated—Text of resolution forming agreement—Cordial relations established between the two hunts—Credit due to Dr. Gaye, Mr. Hext, Mr. A. Rendell and Mr. Lewis Rendell—Mr. Lewis Rendell's work—Made an honorary life member of the hunt—A presentation.

> "And evermore they'll tell with praise
> Of forest meets and Dartmoor days."
>
> (*Dartmoor Days.*)

IN the summer of 1890, a case was laid before the Masters of Foxhounds Association for the arbitration of that body in reference to a question of right to country that had arisen between the South Devon Hunt and its neighbour on the north now known as the Mid-Devon Hunt, the master of which was at that time Mr. Salusbury Thomas.

Inasmuch as fully a quarter of a century has passed since the decision of the M. F. H. Association—the highest Court in these matters—was pronounced, it is not proposed to go into the subject in detail or at any length, but, as a matter of history,

MRS. HEXT

MR. GEORGE H. HEXT

Chairman of Hunt Committee

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it is proper that both the circumstances that led up to the arbitration and the facts proved at the time should be briefly mentioned.

As far back as the time of the first mastership of Mr. Ross, that gentleman had occasion to complain of his foxes being hunted in the moor portion of the country by a pack of harriers kept at Moretonhampstead by Mr. George Bragg, and letters from both masters appeared at the time in the sporting papers.

Mr. Ross's successor, Mr. Fearnley Tanner, took the matter up with some energy, and the information which he obtained at the time from previous masters of the South Devon and others was very useful at the arbitration that eventually followed.

After the establishment of a separate pack to hunt the Haldon side, the South Devon found itself able to make more use of its moor country. Bragg, however, continued to hunt over a considerable part of it, with the result that protest succeeded protest from successive masters, Ross, Whidborne and Gaye in turn asserting their claim to the country which was the field of Bragg's operations. The situation at last grew intolerable; the South Devon, hunting on a Tuesday, would find itself drawing country which had been disturbed on the previous day by Bragg, whose hunting day was Monday. Newspaper correspondence followed and feeling became acute between the supporters of the rival claimants.

This ill-feeling in Whidborne's time made itself felt, as I remember, twice in the same day. The South Devon hounds had come to slow hunting in Lustleigh Cleave with a beaten fox just before them. The fox crossed in front of Miss Whidborne, Dr. Collyns (Mr. Bragg's honorary secretary who was out) and myself, and Miss Whidborne implored of me to

holloa. It happened that my mouth was full of plum cake, which could not be disposed of for some moments without a sacrifice of economy, so I appealed to Dr. Collyns who, rightly enough, no doubt, from his point of view, resolutely refused to help in the killing of what he considered to be one of Mr. Bragg's foxes. We did kill soon after, almost at the feet of Mrs. Splatt who was walking alone in the Cleave, and who, I remember, had taken advantage of the solitude of the spot to let down her hair, which was very beautiful and reached almost to the ground. On Whitmore's expressing a polite wish that she had been on horseback with us, Mrs. Splatt drew herself up with the majestic air she was wont to assume when playing *Lady Macbeth* and answered with crushing emphasis: "*I* hunt with Mr. Bragg's hounds in *this* country."

Meanwhile Bragg was deaf to all remonstrance and no doubt believed himself to be the aggrieved party. He did, indeed, during Gaye's mastership offer to draw a line of definition; but it was to endure only while the Doctor remained in office, and the boundary suggested would have deprived the South Devon of much of the best of the moor which it claimed as of right. Anxious as were the members of the committee to effect an amicable settlement, they were therefore unable to accept the terms offered. Eventually, in the year 1890, as stated, the dispute was referred by consent to the M. F. H. Association.

It may here not be out of place to point out the law on the subject of acquiring a title to a new country. By the unwritten law of foxhunting, a hunt can acquire a right to a particular country only by hunting it for twenty seasons consecutively without interference or break, and without making any admission that it is held on loan from some other

hunt. If the hunt claiming to have acquired a particular bit of country has omitted during the period of acquisition to hunt it for a single season, or has hunted it otherwise than with foxhounds *pur et simple* (by which is meant hounds hunting fox and fox only), or has made an admission that it is hunted on loan from another hunt, the claimant cannot make a good title, and the prescribed period of twenty years has to begin again from the date of such omission, irregular hunting, or admission.

The claim set up on behalf of the pack formerly hunted by Mr. Bragg, now known as the Mid-Devon, appears to have rested on the following allegations: that the disputed region had been hunted continuously by Bragg with his own hounds since 1865; that previous to that year it had been hunted for a great number of years by packs other than the South Devon; that neither Haworth, Lane nor Whidborne (in his first mastership) ever made a fixture further moorwards than Reddaford Water and Yarner; that the leave of the landowners had been obtained; that Bragg in the past had held, and his successor at that time held, a licence from the Duchy of Cornwall to hunt foxes within its territory, and that the country in dispute never was South Devon country.

The answer of the South Devon was to the effect that at the time Bragg first set up his claim, and from then right down to the year 1880, his hounds were harriers, and, as such, had no status and were incapable of acquiring a country as foxhounds; that the South Devon had regularly hunted over the disputed area since 1865 and also long before that date; that any other packs hunting it had done so with the permission of the South Devon Hunt; that the leave of landowners or licence from the Duchy could

not affect the question of title, and that the country was, and always had been, South Devon country.

It is rather curious that Mr. Thomas and his committee appear to have placed great reliance on the Duchy licence. For, in truth, such a licence could have no bearing whatever on the case. Undoubtedly a licence from the Duchy, like permission from a private owner of property, is of great and vital importance to a hunt in the *exercise* of its rights according to hunting law, but neither licence nor permission can affect or abridge those rights in themselves. Well-known instances are recorded where a master of hounds has had to ask leave of another hunt to draw his own coverts with his own hounds, by reason of such coverts forming part of the country belonging, in a hunting sense, to the other hunt. This being so, it is rather remarkable that any importance should have been attached to the existence of the Duchy licence as affecting the question of a right or title to country according to hunting law.

A mass of "evidence" in support of its case was put in by the South Devon, which proved conclusively from the files of the *Field* and otherwise that Bragg's harriers were first changed to foxhounds at the beginning of the season 1880–1, and that the South Devon had regularly and frequently met during Westlake's mastership, and also subsequently, at the following places, namely: Park, Bovey; Yarner; Reddaford Water; Heatree Gate; Manaton; Spitchwick; Ilsington; Welstor Cross; Manor House, Widdicombe; Furzeleigh; Halsanger; Bagtor; Cockingford Mill; Swallaton Gate; Widdicombe; Hedge Barton; New Bridge; Heytor Buildings, etc.

In addition to this, it was proved that the country claimed by Mr. Thomas was actually and always had

been South Devon country, no other pack hunting fox alone having drawn it since the days of George Templer. In testimony of this, besides other evidence, letters were put in from the following, comprising as will be seen several former masters of the South Devon : Sir Henry Seale, Mr. Lane, Mr. Whidborne, Mr. Westlake, Mr. Evan Baillie, Mr. J. Woodley of Halsanger (a former master of harriers who admitted hunting foxes by permission of the masters of the South Devon), Mr. W. Hole, Mr. Alexander Moffat (for many years secretary of the South Devon), Mr. Henry Michelmore (another former secretary), Mr. Edwin Tucker, Mr. John Wright, Mr. John Kitson, Mr. Robert Vicary, Messrs. Tozer & Son (Ashburton), Major Robert C. Tucker, The Rev. Fitzwilliam Taylor, Mr. J. Pinsent, Mr. Alexander Monro, William Derges, Mr. Ross and Mr. Tanner.

The result of the arbitration was promulgated in the following memorandum :—

"IN RE THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

" Decision of the Committee of the Masters of Foxhounds Association acting as Arbitrators between the South Devon and Mr. Thomas's (Chagford) Hunts in reference to right of Country.

" M. F. H. ASSOCIATION,
TATTERSALLS,
LONDON, S.W.
July 5th, 1900.

" The Members of the Masters of Foxhounds Association Committee, appointed as Arbitrators, having carefully considered the statements made by the South Devon and Mr. Thomas's Hunts, are of opinion that the Country hunted by Mr. Thomas's hounds belongs solely to the South Devon Hunt.

(Signed) E. PARK YATES, Chairman.
,, TREDEGAR.
,, H. H. LANGHAM.
,, CHESHAM."

In the face of the evidence that Bragg's pack had only been converted into foxhounds in the year 1880, a fact which was admitted by Mr. Thomas's secretary shortly before the hearing of the arbitration, it was impossible for Mr. Thomas to succeed.

It will be noticed, though, that the decision was not based on this fact alone. If it had been, it would have taken the negative form of deciding that Mr. Thomas's hunt had not made out its title to the disputed area. The decision goes a great deal farther than that ; it shews that the positive evidence adduced by the South Devon was investigated by the arbitrators and was such as to satisfy them that the South Devon had proved its title, not only to the strip of moorland immediately in question, but to the whole of the country hunted by Mr. Thomas.

The award was accepted by Mr. Thomas's hunt in a thoroughly sportsmanlike spirit, and, in the same spirit, the South Devon, being thus left in possession of the field, promptly set about making an arrangement for the loan of a part of its vast territory to its neighbour. A meeting took place at Dr. Gaye's house on the 30th July, 1890, between representatives of the two hunts, when it was arranged that Mr. Thomas's hounds might hunt the country north of the road leading from Moretonhampstead to Princetown, during Dr. Gaye's mastership of the South Devon. Later, in 1894, at a meeting of the committee of the South Devon Hunt held on the 22nd August, a more enduring arrangement was proposed, as expressed in the following resolution, the terms of which were afterwards accepted by the committee of the Mid-Devon Hunt and have ever since been adhered to :—

"That the committee of the South Devon Hunt hereby express their readiness to grant or let to the Mid-Devon Hunt, so long as they observe the strict laws of hunting, the occupation of that portion of their country which lies on the North and West of the road leading from Moretonhampstead to Princetown (as shewn by a plan) in consideration of the payment to them of £5 a year (being a subscription to the Warreners' Fund) such country to be held by the Mid-Devon Hunt, but no other, so long only as it exists, it being expressly understood that if the Mid-Devon Hunt is given up, the country in question is at once to revert to the South Devon Hunt; and, further, that in case of a question of any kind arising between the two Hunts the same is to be referred to the M. F. H. Association, whose decision the two hunts shall accept, act up to, and be bound by."

Harmony was thus restored. The most cordial relations have ever since obtained between the two hunts, and many a pleasant day has each enjoyed, by invitation, in its neighbour's country.

Few people realize the amount of work which this arbitration involved. Its success was due to the energy of the master, Dr. Gaye, to the tact and good temper of the honorary secretary, Mr. George Hext, who had the conduct of the negotiations with the other side, to the generous services of Mr. Arthur Rendell, whose intimate knowledge of the country was invaluable, and, above all, to the ability and untiring zeal of his brother, Mr. Lewis Rendell, who, being in practice in London as a solicitor, undertook the preparation of the Case to be laid before the Association and the evidence in support of it.

On him fell the labour of sorting, dissecting and arranging the mass of correspondence and other material gathered together by the industry of the others, of digesting its contents, sifting the evidence and reducing the whole into order, and of preparing

the " brief " with its copious appendices. In addition to this, there were the files of the *Field* and other sporting papers to be searched, writers of articles and others to be hunted out and consulted, interviews with many people to be held and a voluminous correspondence with those at home of an explanatory and detailed nature. Well did Mr. Lewis Rendell deserve the cordial vote of thanks accorded him at a general meeting of the hunt on the 29th October, 1890, and the compliment then paid him by electing him an honorary member of the hunt for life.

His assistance was soon afterwards recognized in a more substantial way by the presentation to him of a marble chiming clock bearing the inscription :

" Presented to Lewis Rendell, Esq., as a mark of esteem from the Members of the South Devon Hunt. 1891."

III

REUNION

MAJOR ST. MAUR

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CHAPTER XIX

MR. HAROLD ST. MAUR: 1893-7

The new master's conditions—Staff and kennels—Stover in war time—Appointment of field-masters—Hunting the Haldon side—Change of title: "Mr. St. Maur's Hounds (The South Devon)"—Prominent members of the hunt—Ladies in the field—The hunting parson—The medical profession—The Torquay and Paignton contingents—Other followers—Newcomers during Mr. St. Maur's mastership—Resignation of the master—Resignation withdrawn—New conditions—Resolution and vote of thanks—Second resignation—Offer of loan of pack—Formation of a sub-committee—Fund to purchase hounds and horses—Generous offer by Mr. St. Maur—Loan of country to the Mid-Devon: definition of area.

> "And why should the master alone of old Stover
> Have his merits and faults in silence passed over?"
> (*A Party at Stover.*)

THE actual reunion of the Haldon side with the Newton side was effected, as has been seen, toward the close of Dr. Gaye's mastership.

On the retirement of Dr. Gaye, negotiations were entered into with Mr. St. Maur of Stover which resulted in an offer from that gentleman to hunt the country three days a week, one of which was to be appropriated to the Haldon side. He was to be guaranteed a subscription of £600 a year; the earth-stopping and damage fund to be paid by the hunt, and the Pulsford kennels to be at the disposal of the master rent-free for the remaining two years of the lease. On these terms, Mr. St. Maur was elected master at a general meeting held at Newton Abbot on the 1st March, 1893.

The new master was twenty-four years of age. For two or three years he had held a commission in the

14th Hussars, but after his marriage had left the service and settled on his own property at Stover. His soldiering days, however, were not over, for he was destined later to see active service in the Boer War, having volunteered for service, and on his return he joined the Royal 1st Devon Yeomanry in which he is now a Major. He is also a considerable landowner and lord of three manors.

Collings was kept on as huntsman. His son, Frank, who had been in Dr. Gaye's service for five years, first as second horseman and then as whip, also went to Stover to whip in to his father and remained there throughout Mr. St. Maur's reign.

Mr. St. Maur built new kennels at Stover, whither the hounds were moved as soon as the new quarters were ready to receive them.

The sport during this mastership was excellent, as appears from the resolution passed at its close to be noticed presently. Yet details are not available, for my own diary fails me, and that of the master is inaccessible at the moment. After the outbreak of war, Stover was converted into a Red Cross Hospital, where a score of badly wounded soldiers were, until quite recently, treated under the very able personal management of Mrs. St. Maur. Major St. Maur, as he now is, at present is on active service and was through the Gallipoli Expedition with his youngest son. His eldest son is with his regiment, the 14th Hussars, at Kut-el-Amara, and his second son is in the Air Department, Royal Naval Division. Truly a good record for one family.

In the spring of 1895, at the master's suggestion, the following gentlemen were appointed to act in rotation as field-masters in the event of his absence :

Messrs. G. H. Hext, R. Vicary, W. Engelhardt, H. P. Skidmore, W. Rendell and Captain Templer. It was also agreed that there should be no obligation on the master to hunt the Haldon side one day a week as originally intended, but that the hunting in that district should be left to the discretion of the master, who, moreover, was not to be bound to take the field on any stipulated days other than Tuesdays and Saturdays. It was further decided, at the master's request, the pack being his own property, that the hunting appointments should in future be advertised in the name of "Mr. St. Maur's Hounds (the South Devon)."

It is difficult to classify under the various masterships the members and followers of the hunt. They form an ever-changing body, and some last many years longer than others. The composition of the field in Mr. St. Maur's time was, on the whole, very much the same as it had been during the *régime* of his predecessor, Dr. Gaye, and the following were, for the most part, hunting pretty regularly under both masters.

The older members (in the sense only that they had followed the South Devon under several previous masters), included Messrs. W. R. Hole, G. H. Hext, A. Rendell, A. Hingston, J. Kitson, W. C. Clack, T. Codner, H. W. Steele, P. Symons, R. Vicary, C. G. Vicary, E. Tucker, F. C. Simpson, Captain J. G. E. Templer, Messrs. E. Fearnley Tanner, H. S. Wright, J. Whidborne (in Dr. Gaye's time), and Major Keating.

Ladies were not nearly so numerous in the field twenty or thirty years ago as they are to-day. The most prominent of them were Mrs. Goodwyn, Mrs. G. H. Hext, Mrs. Henley, Miss Norris, daughter of

the well-known novelist, W. E. Norris; Mrs. Ripley, who, with her husband, Mr. H. M. B. Ripley of Hob Green, Yorkshire, was a regular visitor to Torquay for a series of winters; Miss Tempest, now Lady Beaumont, also wintering at Torquay; Lady Freake from Dartmouth, Miss Simmons, Mrs. Splatt, Lady Clifford of Chudleigh, Miss E. Tayleur, Miss Whidborne and Mrs. Wale.

Strangely enough, the hunting parson, for which Devon has always been noted, was not conspicuous in this hunt during the period under review, and the only one I can call to mind was the "Hunt Chaplain," the Rev. W. H. Thornton, an accomplished sportsman who lived at North Bovey. He died in the spring of the present year, and though he had not hunted latterly, he continued to the last to take an interest in the sport. But we, at one time, had among the field a Methodist minister, the Rev. J. Cocking from Moretonhampstead, who wore a red coat and rode very hard.

There was, indeed, another clergyman who hunted for a few seasons with the pack, but I think he was hardly out when Mr. St. Maur was master. This was the Rev. Joe Pitt, a delightful man of the old school, of whom Sir Reginald Graham gives an amusing sketch in his *Foxhunting Reminiscences*. He was a friend of the eighth Duke of Beaufort, and a great admirer of the Badminton pack and country, though I believe he actually lived in the Cotswold country before he came to end his days at Torquay.

The medical profession, on the other hand, was well represented by Dr. Goodwyn from Bovey, Dr. Haydon and Dr. Scott from Newton, Dr. Little from Teignmouth, Dr. Symons and afterwards Dr. Ross

STOVER AT THE PRESENT TIME

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Macdonald from Kingskerswell, Dr. Raby from Totnes and Dr. Laurie, a frequent visitor from the Mid-Devon.

Torquay has always put a contingent in the field which frequently included a visitor or two anxious to see a little of Devonshire hunting. Among the regular followers from that town were: Mr. Cassavetti (in Dr. Gaye's time), whose flask of cold beef-tea must have been only less uninviting than Hugo Meynell's famous tincture of rhubarb; Major Hargreave, always in front; Mr. H. M. B. Ripley, already mentioned; Mr. C. Tayleur and Mr. Engelhardt, the best-turned-out man in the hunt and, for his weight, one of the best to go. Mr. Engelhardt was also a first-rate four-in-hand coachman; I should say, without exaggeration, one of the best of his day, and thoroughly versed in all the details of coaching. The road-coach that he ran daily through the summer about the year 1892 from Torquay to Exeter and back, with changes at Newton, Teignmouth and Starcross, was perfection.

From Paignton came Messrs. A. M. Singer and W. M. G. Singer and Mr. H. S. Kruger, no relation, by the way, to Oom Paul.

There were also Mr. B. D. Webster, for ten years master of the Haldon Harriers, to whom is due the credit of putting that pack on a firm footing; and Mr. Mark Ball, its present master; Messrs. J. J. Cross, one of the keenest and best; S. Hacker, C. Henley, G. F. Kellock, now joint-master with Mr. C. J. Swears of the Dart Vale Harriers; Godfrey Lee, T. Maye, W. Rendell, W. J. Phillips, J. Fletcher Robinson, Rogers, the relieving-officer at Ashburton, and Farmer John Hopkins, both strong allies of Collings'; H. S. Steele, who on his chestnut could

pound us all; Parnell Tucker, Solomon Tozer of Ashburton, on his famous grey; S. P. Adams; Captain Sherrard and, lastly, Colonel Walsh, Captain A. G. Tozer and Mr. Basil Tozer of Teignmouth.

From the outskirts, or from neighbouring hunts, would come Mr. Brunskill and Mr. C. H. H. Pitts from the south; Messrs. Hamlyn from Buckfastleigh, Mr. Hayter-Hames, sometime master of the Mid-Devon, and Mr. G. Spiller, a later master of the same pack, from Chagford; Mr. J. D. Prickman, for many years its honorary secretary; and Mr. Guy Whipham. Others who lived out of the country never failed to snatch a day when opportunity offered. Prominent among these was Mr. W. F. Phillpotts, always cheerful and with a temper that nothing seemed to ruffle, despite his deafness. He was an astonishing man to go, and kept his nerve to a late period. In his sixty-sixth year he won the Bar point-to-point steeplechase, and *when four years older* rode in the East Devon Hunt heavy-weight point-to-point and got placed. This was surely pretty good for one whose occupation (he was a conveyancing barrister in London) kept him from the saddle for long periods at a time! Mr. Lewis Rendell was another who always enjoyed a dart when he could get out of London for a short holiday.

Those of the younger generation who have since turned out well, not merely as performers in the field but as taking an interest in the affairs of the hunt and promoting them in the many ways possible, included Mr. Raleigh Phillpotts, Messrs. W. R. Vicary, L. G. Vicary, C. L. Vicary and Alfred Hingston.

The field was strengthened and the gaps filled up in Mr. St. Maur's time by the arrival of new-comers

in the country and younger folk coming on. The reinforcements to the ladies' brigade included Mrs. St. Maur, who has probably not forgotten how narrowly she once escaped annihilation by a clumsy horseman; Mrs. Potts-Chatto, Mrs. W. Rendell (then Miss Turner) and her two sisters, Mrs. Treeby, Miss Frost, Miss Blundell, Mrs. Leicester, Miss Eardley-Wilmot, Miss Eve, Miss Tudor and Miss White. Of these, the last-named and Miss Frost are the only ones that join the glad throng to-day. The men comprised Mr. G. E. Allen, Mr. J. Alsop, Mr. R. H. E. Burt, who remained loyal to the South Devon even after he had quitted its boundaries; Messrs. J. Bickford, W. H. Eve, J. Fairweather, W. Ferrier-Kerr, E. Lewis, Major Lyster, Mr. T. S. Scrimgeour, who contributed, and still contributes, to the popularity of fixtures around Natsworthy Manor by his staunch preservation of foxes, to say nothing of his hospitality; Messrs. H. P. Skidmore, Mountford Spencer, R. Halford-Thompson and, when in England, Captain Tudor and Mr. Arthur Wright. Mr. Robert Long, brother to Mr. Walter Long, was among the visitors at this period.

At the beginning of the season 1895–6, Mr. St. Maur notified the committee that he would not continue to hunt the country after that season, and though pressed to reconsider his decision he did not at first see his way to do so. In the month of December, however, he was induced to withdraw his resignation and consented to hunt the country the following season two days a week (he had been putting in four days up to that time) on a subscription of £500. At a general meeting of the hunt held on the 18th December, 1895, a resolution was passed recording a vote of thanks to Mr. St. Maur " for the exceedingly

liberal and efficient way in which he had hunted the country in the past, and for consenting to hunt it next season."

At the close of the season 1896–7, Mr. St. Maur finally resigned. An attempt to procure a master by advertisement was made but proved abortive, and it appeared that the only thing to be done was for the committee to carry on for the time being. Mr. St. Maur offered to lend the committee his hounds, huntsman's house, kennels and stables on condition the hunt would guarantee a thousand pounds a year for three years to meet the expenses of hunting the country. A canvas was accordingly made, but, as the required guarantee was not forthcoming, it was impossible to accept the retiring master's offer, which fact was put on record at a general meeting held on the 3rd March, 1897, at which the appreciation of Mr. St. Maur's services to the hunt was expressed in a vote of thanks "for his services as master of the South Devon Hunt for the past four seasons, in which the record of the hunt has in every way been more than maintained, for never has the hunt been more efficiently equipped; never have the hounds been of such a high standard of merit; and never, taking the average of four years, has better sport been obtained."

A fund was there and then started for the purpose of purchasing a pack of hounds, and a sum of £213 was raised in the room and arrangements were made to invite further contributions. A sub-committee consisting of Messrs. Robert Vicary, W. M. G. Singer, E. Lewis, W. Rendell and G. H. Hext was formed and authorized to purchase hounds, horses and equipment and to take all necessary steps to carry on the hunt during the following season.

In the middle of the month of March a proposal

SOME OF MR. ST. MAUR'S HOUNDS

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was received from Mr. St. Maur, accompanied by certain suggestions for the good management of the hunt.

The terms of Mr. St. Maur's proposal were as follows :—

" 1. I will provide the hunt with twenty-two couple and a half of my best hounds. (This number would enable us to breed our own entry next year.) The hounds would of course remain my own property, but I would agree to give twelve months' notice before taking them back.

" 2. I will pay the expenses of walking puppies and give the usual prizes ; also pay for the journeys and fees of such bitches as would have to be sent to dogs of another pack.

" 3. All drafts I will give to the huntsman as his perquisite, and I will also pay the licences for the pack.

" 4. I offer the choice of any of the hunt horses the committee may wish to buy at twenty pounds apiece.

" 5. Should it be any advantage to the hunt, I will lend the huntsman my kennels, field and half the stable, subject to twelve months' notice.

" 6. Should the committee desire a master and not find anyone who has sufficient time to devote to the business of the hunt, and should the hunt think they can repose sufficient confidence in me, I would not object to undertake the duties provided someone else was appointed to do the work in my absence. I must ask the committee not to imagine that by this offer I am making a bid for the mastership, but to believe that I only make the offer because it may be difficult to find anyone who has the time or inclination for the job. The offers I have just made are not conditional

on my having any official connection with the hunt; they will hold good whatever committee or master may be appointed, so long as they are suitable."

Mr. St. Maur's offer was certainly an exceedingly generous one and made in the spirit of a true sportsman. I do not know the reasons that precluded the hunt from availing itself of such an offer, unhampered as it was by any conditions; but the fact remains that the proposal was not accepted, and the sub-committee proceeded to the consideration of the functions deputed to it of making arrangements to hunt the country.

Meanwhile, an application was received from Mr. Gilbert Spiller and Mr. G. C. Ralston, the newly appointed joint-masters of the Mid-Devon, for leave to hunt a further part of the South Devon country, and a loan for one season was assented to of certain portions of the South Devon country as coloured on a map and which may be identified by the following description:—

1. A tract of land lying on the west of the Teign and bounded on the east by that river, on the north by the Exeter and Moretonhampstead road starting from a point just below Dunsford, on the west by the road leading from Chagford to Lustleigh and on the south by an irregular line starting from the last-named village, continuing to Kelly, thence to Slade Cross and Poolmill Cross, and so, following the road from there to Hennock, rejoining the Teign at Crocombe Bridge.

2. A tract of land lying on the east of the Teign, its western boundary marching with the piece numbered 1 above from Dunsford to Bridford Mill, bounded on the south and east by the road from

Bridford Mill by Leigh Cross and Windy Cross to Idestone and Ide and somewhat beyond to a point where that road joins the Exeter and Moretonhampstead road, which latter formed the northern boundary as far as Longdown. From Longdown the boundary diverged to the north and took in a slice of country embracing Holcombe Burnell and Culver.

CHAPTER XX

MR. ROBERT VICARY AND MR. WASHINGTON M. G. SINGER, 1897–1901

Associations with the country—A timely offer—Appointed joint-masters—Hunt finances—Other troubles—Collings still huntsman—Frank Collings—A new whipper-in—Tragic death of Collings: killed at an earth—Calamity for the Hunt—Mr. E. P. Bovey appointed to succeed him—A good run—Record of sport—A day of disasters—Bovey joins the Imperial Yeomanry—Killed in action in the Boer War—Choules promoted to huntsman—Sir John Amory's Staghounds in South Devon—Mr. Vicary as a sportsman—His kennel of fox-terriers widely known—World-wide reputation as a judge of dog or hound—List of places at which he has judged—His eye for hound or horse—Sets about improving the pack—His experience of other countries—The pack—Some favourite hounds—Kennels most fancied—His horses—Sons and other members of the family—Revives Newton Abbot Steeplechases: the arrangements remodelled and improved—Resigns and leaves Mr. Singer to carry on.

> "The brave pack meanwhile rivalled swallows for speed,
> And did justice to him who had managed their breed."
> (*The Chumleigh Club.* By Geo. Templer, 1814.)

MR. ROBERT VICARY has been a staunch supporter of the South Devon for a great number of years and a keen follower of the pack from his boyhood, now longer ago than he cares to brood upon, and Mr. Singer, who will be treated of in the next chapter, had, for some years prior to Mr. St. Maur's resignation, identified himself with the hunt and the country.

It was a fitting thing that these two gentlemen, in a most public-spirited manner, should offer their services to the country at a moment when it appeared that, for the first time in the history of the hunt, the

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management would have to be undertaken by the committee.

At that time, Mr. Vicary was the mainspring of the large tannery business at Newton Abbot of Messrs. John Vicary & Sons. This, with other calls upon his time entailed by his position as a member of various public bodies and a Justice of the Peace for the County, left him little leisure to devote to the onerous duties of a modern master of hounds. Mr. Singer, too, though a free man, had many other interests, some of which took him frequently from home. When therefore he and Mr. Vicary, prompted solely by the desire to promote sport and to help the hunt out of a difficulty, volunteered to become its joint-masters, their offer came quite unexpectedly and was appreciated at its true value. They were formally appointed masters at a general meeting held on the 28th July, 1897, on the terms that they should receive a subscription of £600 a year, on which a reduction of £100 was agreed to for their second season in consequence of the low state of the exchequer. At that time, the hunt accounts shewed an adverse balance of £327 odd, part of which had been incurred in respect of the season prior to the new mastership. Despite a special effort, generously responded to by the usual dozen or score of members, the accounts at the end of the season 1898–9 still shewed a deficit, amounting to £282 12s. 2d. Towards this Mr. Singer himself contributed the generous, if quaint, sum of £153 15s. 7d. conditionally upon the balance being raised, as was done, by special subscription. Nevertheless, when the agreed term of the joint-masters expired at the end of the season 1900–1, there was again a deficit, this time of some £450. It apparently is often the case, though it should not be so, that the

difficulty of raising money in a hunt is greater where the master is a man of means.

Financial troubles were not the only ones that befell the hunt during this mastership. On the opening day of the season 1898–9 the honorary secretary, Mr. G. H. Hext, had his leg broken through being kicked in the field and was laid up for the rest of the season. In the same winter, Mr. Vicary caught such a severe cold on the moor as to render him temporarily deaf and to debar him from taking the field for a considerable time. Worse was to come.

Collings had been kept on as huntsman. His reputation was at its height, and he was an invaluable servant, especially to masters who had not at their disposal the time necessary to visit the distant parts of such a large country. Collings' son, Frank, left at the end of the first season to go into business at Marychurch, whence some time later he went to Chagford and took the Three Crowns Hotel. He is still there, and ever since settling at Chagford has been of great service to the Mid-Devon Hunt, at times hunting the pack, and at other times undertaking its sole management on behalf of the committee.

The vacancy in the hunt staff was filled, after a temporary appointment, by the engagement of Harry Choules as first whip. He came to take up his duties on the morning of the 20th December, 1898—an eventful day as it proved—just as Collings was starting with the hounds for Welstor Cross, but he did not accompany the pack. Neither of the masters was out that day.

A fox was found, and, after running through Lizwell Wood, went to earth in a clitter of rocks on the steep hillside at Avychurch in Buckland Woods. Collings set the terrier to work and took up his

position beside a large boulder at the top of the mass of granite stones forming the clitter. Mr. J. J. Cross was standing within a yard or two of Collings, under whose directions Doney, the second whip, and a groom from Buckland Court were engaged below in pulling out the smaller stones to facilitate the terrier's movements. Suddenly, on the removal of one particular stone which proved to be the foundation-stone of the pile, the whole mass gave way and came down with a run, bringing Collings with it; the huge top boulder, estimated to weigh at least three tons, pitched on the poor fellow and then rolled on for a short distance. Collings was crushed like a fly and killed instantaneously. The others just escaped by throwing themselves out of the way.

The few people who composed the field that day were waiting in the upper drive. Among them was Dr. F. E. Little, who kept a lonely vigil over the body by the banks of the crying Dart until a conveyance could be obtained, and then took the dead huntsman home. On Mr. Cross and Doney fell the duty of taking the pack back to the kennels and breaking the news to Mrs. Collings.

We buried the poor fellow at Denbury on Christmas Eve and he was carried to his grave by some of his "intimates." A great number of people attended.

The untimely death of Collings was indeed a calamity for the hunt. He knew the country intimately and the people in it, among whom he had become very popular, for they understood him and appreciated, fully as well as did the members of the field, his success as huntsman. He was always desperately keen, and nothing was too much trouble if it tended to promote sport.

The masters had a difficult task in finding a suc-

cessor in the middle of the season. It was essential to have someone with a general knowledge of the country, and after due deliberation they secured the services of Mr. E. P. Bovey, who at the time was master and huntsman of the Ashburton Harriers. It was trying a man rather high to pitchfork him suddenly into such a position, but the selection was approved as the best that could be made under the circumstances.

It was only in the nature of things that sport should suffer. Still, we had some good runs and the new huntsman worked hard to shew sport. One day in particular, the 21st of February, 1899, did him great credit. It was on the Haldon side, a country absolutely unknown to Bovey. A fox from Oxton made a six-mile point to beyond the Rectory at Doddiscombsleigh, going first over the open plain of Haldon by Harcombe, the Racecourse and Oxencombe, and then threading the great woodlands and deep bottoms of Whiteway and Kiddens. A countryman saw the fox in a lane, "seat all over," but he got into some shippens (as was discovered later) and beat the pack.

Only three saw this run. The huntsman was one and a younger son of Mr. R. Vicary was another; neither knew an inch of the line, and after reaching Whiteway they had no pilot but the pack.

Other good days there were, such as the 25th of the same month, when, from New Buildings, they ran round Pinchaford Ball to Lower Bagtor and Sigford and by Owl's Rattle to Halsanger, Bagtor Wood and the Big Rubble Heap, whence a fresh fox brought them back at a tremendous pace to New Buildings and Lower Bagtor, then more slowly to Owlacombe tin mine, where he went in. He was bolted and killed after another sharp burst.

Our time was well filled in on the 6th January, 1900, with a capital day's sport from Reddaford Water. First, a run through Lustleigh Cleave to the Rubble Heap; then a big ring with another fox, hounds running in view for the last mile and killing him *on* the Heap before he could get in; finishing with a run from Yarner to Stover over a delightful line with plenty of big sound banks.

Despite a cold and stormy day with a falling glass, the pack gave a most creditable hunting run of two hours and a half on the 27th January, 1900, with just a holding scent, all over and around Lindridge and Ugbrooke, the extreme points being Bishopsteignton and the Thorns. They made a good point on the 24th of the following month, finding their fox at Granite Lodge, and after taking him by Langaller and Brimley, through Yarner, Houndtor Ridge and Lustleigh Cleave, and on beyond Lustleigh Rectory, brought him back to the Cleave and earthed him there. The 17th of March in the same year at Heytor Buildings was a day of recurrent snowstorms with some pretty sport in between, and on the 20th the moor was under snow and hunting impossible.

A very sharp burst of twenty-eight minutes after meeting at Leighon on the 24th March, 1900, produced an unusual amount of grief amongst the field. One of the joint-masters, Mr. W. M. G. Singer, broke his arm, Mr. Hayter-Hames and four others were down together and Bovey took a heavy fall on Challacombe. Snow was still lying on the moor and was the cause of some of these disasters.

Probably the best run during Bovey's time was one that came off from Widdicombe on a certain Saturday; I have not the exact date. The first part was all over Challacombe, Hamildon and Birch Tor

very fast; then slower hunting in the same region, and then away, undoubtedly with a fresh fox, at a great pace, over the Moreton road by Metherell and to ground at Hempson Rocks. The whole run occupied one hour and three-quarters.

Another first-class day was the 1st of December, 1900, when Choules was hunting the pack. It is a long way out to Heatree, and the late Mr. John Kitson, knowing that the field would be ready for a second breakfast when they arrived, acted accordingly. From Shapely Bog, hounds raced a fox over King Tor to the Moreton road, left-handed to Birch Tor, Sousand and Challacombe; then, after a check, through Blackaton Newtake to the Gorse above Widdicombe and scent failed on Bittleford Down after forty-five minutes. This was followed by a fine run of sixty minutes from Bag Park over Hamildon by Blackaton, Challacombe, Grendon and Cator to Pondsworthy.

Bovey continued to act as huntsman until the end of the season 1899–1900. He then joined the Imperial Yeomanry and went out to South Africa, where he fell a victim to his patriotism, being killed in action. Choules, the first whip, was then promoted, but as often happens when a man has long been in the subordinate position, he was not an unqualified success as huntsman.

It was during this dual mastership that the late Sir John Amory's Staghounds came down from Tiverton to try for certain red deer stated to have been frequenting Buckland Woods for some three or four years past. Mr. Ian Amory, who hunted his father's pack, stayed at Holne Park with the Hon. Richard Dawson. They met on the 11th October, 1898, at Welstor Cross, but the large field was doomed to a

blank day. I believe they spent another fruitless day in the locality, no deer being seen or even slotted.

Besides being a good horseman and, in his younger days, a distinctly hard rider, Mr. Vicary took a great interest in hounds and their work. This was but natural in one who had always been a "doggy" man. The fox-terrier, both the rough and the smooth variety, has always been his speciality, and his kennel is well known wherever that popular dog flourishes. His reputation as a judge, not only of the terrier but of other breeds of dogs, hounds included, is world-wide, as will be seen from the following list of places at which he has acted as judge, mostly on several occasions :—

Crystal Palace, K.C. ; Botanical Gardens, L.K.A. ; Agricultural Hall, London ; Maddison Gardens, New York ; Cork, Clifton, Dublin, Limerick, Belfast, Berlin, Vienna, Leipsic, Paris, Halberstadt, Amsterdam, Edinburgh, S.K.C. ; Oxford, F.T.C. ; Derby, F.T.C. ; Baden, Bristol, Plymouth, Exeter, Taunton, Crediton, Barnstaple, Manchester, Birkenhead, Nottingham, Leicester, Brighton, Chester, Blackpool, F.T.C. ; Antwerp, Brussels, Falmouth, Redruth, Helston, Crickhowell and many others. On two occasions, Mr. Vicary had an engagement to go to Russia, but each time it fell through. Other invitations came from San Francisco, from Sydney and other places in Australia and from South Africa. These, however, had to be declined for want of the necessary time.

The above postulates a long experience previously acquired ; but experience alone, without the natural gift of "a good eye" for the animal, is of no use. This "good eye" is a far less common attribute than some of our friends would have us believe. Mr. Vicary has it in a marked degree both for hound and

horse. The late Lord Portsmouth had it, and of him it was said that, given a fortnight's practice, he would be a good judge of a giraffe! In addition, Mr. Vicary's character for integrity and impartiality, qualities not always associated with the necessary talent, was an additional factor that accounted for his being so much sought after as a judge.

It will be understood, then, with what alacrity he set about improving the *personnel* of the pack, paying due regard to symmetry and parentage but not losing sight of hunting qualities. He was observant of hounds in their work, a much easier thing, by the way, for a man who has a good memory for a hound than for another, and had begun his hunting career in South Devon in the days of Westlake and had also seen sport in Cheshire, in Warwickshire, with the Duke of Beaufort and with Lord Fitzhardinge's and other good packs. I sometimes think one is more observant and learns more in a single day in a strange country than in half a season amid familiar surroundings at home.

The joint-masters began with a pack of thirty-one couple. Casualties and other causes reduced this number by four couple, but in the meanwhile the additional purchase of eleven-and-a-half couple brought up the strength of the pack to thirty-eight couple and a half. In their second season, the pack numbered forty couple and a half; in their third, forty-four and a half, and in their last season, forty-three couple. From five days a fortnight the hunting days increased to three days a week, none too many considering the Haldon side was included in the area to be covered.

From the following list of Mr. Vicary's favourites it will be seen that the best kennels in England were represented in the pack.

DOGS

Craftsman, by Lord Macclesfield's Rallywood—His Countess.
Douglas, by Four Burrow Darter—Blackmore Vale Rosalind.
Sampson, by N. Staffordshire Ganymede—Their Surety.
Discount, by Belvoir Dexter—Cambridgeshire Necklace.
Hotspur, by Belvoir Hamlet—Atherstone Remedy.

BITCHES

Giddy, by Lord Portsmouth's Goblin—Duke of Beaufort's Relish.
Harmony, by Warwickshire Fullerton—South Cheshire Heroine.
Careful, by N. Staffordshire Capital—Their Neatness.
Brilliant, by Lord Macclesfield's Craftsman—South Devon Bashful.
Necklace, by Belvoir Nominal—V.W.H. Letty.

Craftsman, if I remember rightly, was a yellow-pied dog that came to the South Devon from the Four Burrow and was used a good deal in both kennels. He was a rare hunter. Discount was a good hound, and one easy to remember from a large white spot on one side of his quarter. It used to give some of us considerable satisfaction to point him out to a stranger: "Discount, by the Belvoir Dexter" sounded well and gave tone to the pack. The information, however, sometimes led to disconcerting questions about other hounds!

Harmony was a rare bitch, full of quality and excellent in her work; but in later years she belied her name and took to running mute, a fault more fatal, probably, in a country like the South Devon than elsewhere.

The kennels most fancied and patronized by Mr.

Vicary for breeding purposes were Lord Portman's and the North Staffordshire (Duke of Sutherland's).

Mr. Vicary was always well mounted and his liking for quality extended to his horses. Among his best, at one time or another were Blondin, by the Arab Mazagan; Bondsman, by Hungerford; Cyclone, by Snowstorm; Orator, by Ranter; Blackthorn, by Alpenstock; Marquis, by Marquis of Townsend; Gingerbread, by Dry Toast.

Four of Mr. Vicary's sons were early entered to the sport. At the time he and Mr. Singer were masters, the most prominent, because the elder, of these were Mr. W. R. Vicary and Mr. L. G. Vicary, both of whom helped their father considerably with the internal details of management and have been of immense service to the hunt in later times. His two younger sons, Norman and Cecil, were also coming on at that time.

One of Mr. Vicary's brothers, the late Mr. Charles G. Vicary, was also a keen follower of the pack for many years, and two at least of his sons had at this time already begun to hunt. One, Mr. Charles Vicary, whose merit as an artist is well known, is at home and in the family business and is consequently able to do a good deal for the hunt. Another, Captain Alec Vicary, in the Gloucester Regiment, is always to be found in the South Devon field when on leave. He and a younger brother are now fighting for their country; both have been twice mentioned in despatches, and both have earned the Military Cross.

It will be seen that the Vicary element was strong in the hunt, and it remains so to this day, to the material advantage of the South Devon.

To Mr. Vicary mainly belongs the credit of revivifying the moribund Newton Abbot Steeplechases.

His enterprise and sporting spirit breathed new life into the concern and put it upon a new and sound footing. The course was improved and a permanent stand erected, the whole arrangements being modelled upon those at Sandown Park, though, necessarily, on a smaller scale. As a result, a better class of horses was attracted. Some of the best riders in the kingdom were to be seen on the Marshes, and the company he formed was just beginning to reap its reward when the war broke out.

At the end of the season 1900–1, the many calls upon his time compelled Mr. Vicary to retire, and he left Mr. Singer to carry on the mastership single-handed.

CHAPTER XXI

MR. WASHINGTON M. G. SINGER: 1901–7

Becomes a naturalized British subject—Early days—Disinterested motives in first taking the country—Volunteers to continue alone on Mr. Vicary's retirement—Hunts the country at his own expense—Field expenses provided by the hunt—Appoints Mr. W. Rendell huntsman—A successful move—Mr. Rendell's qualifications—An appreciation—Mrs. Rendell—Mr. Singer buys the Leighon Estate: advantages to the country—Owner of Blagdon Barton—Shooting tenant of Berry—Hunt staff: W. Cole; H. Thompson—Hunt horses—Mr. Ferris of Capton—The pack—Purchase of the Four Burrow dog pack—The Haldon side loaned to the Tremlett—Possession resumed—Fallow deer on Haldon—A record of good sport: some great runs—A dramatic finish—Red deer in Buckland Woods: visit of the Quantock Staghounds—The South Devon Hunt week—"Sir Henry Seale's country": Pourparlers with the Dartmoor—Important letters—Mr. L. Vicary succeeds Mr. Hext as hon. secretary—A presentation to Mr. Hext—The master's popularity—Some followers of the pack—The master's enforced absence and unexpected resignation—General regret—A resolution of thanks—Complimentary dinner and presentation to Mr. Singer.

> "Swift as arrows of light they skim over the plain,
> Like the torrent then sweep the deep valleys again."
> (*The Chase*. By Geo. Templer.)

MR. W. M. G. SINGER is a son of the late Mr. I. M. Singer, the founder of the American business which has long since attained a world-wide reputation, but he ceased to be an American citizen and became a naturalized British subject soon after attaining his majority. His father had settled at Paignton some years before his death, and so it came about, that, after completing his education in England and on the Continent and spending some time in travel, Mr. Singer made South Devon his home. From football and athletics he graduated in the sports of

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the field, and, in addition to hunting and shooting, soon took an interest in racing and chasing. As a young man he was useful at polo, but that excellent game, like cricket, has never prospered in South Devon owing to the difficulty of finding suitable levels for play or practice.

Fond of hunting as Mr. Singer always was, there is no doubt that he did not seek the honours, such as they are, or the troubles, which are many, that brighten or beset the life of an M.F.H. His coming forward as he did, in conjunction with Mr. R. Vicary, was dictated by feelings of public spirit and solely with the object of saving the country from the unquestionable disadvantage of committee rule.

The joint-masters had had much misfortune to contend with, but when Mr. Vicary retired Mr. Singer had grown so keen that he volunteered to continue in sole command and to hunt the country at his own expense, stipulating only, and very wisely, that the members should themselves provide a damage fund of £250 a year and pay the rent of the kennels and the expenses of keepers and earth-stoppers and their annual dinner.

Mr. Singer then succeeded in persuading Mr. Willie Rendell to hunt the hounds. The pack had not been hunted by an amateur huntsman since the days of Ross, and the appointment of a man of some thirty-eight years of age who had never actually hunted hounds was looked upon in some quarters as rather a bold stroke. So it may have been, but events proved it a successful one and amply justified the master's judgment.

Mr. Rendell had hunted from boyhood, was a light weight and a good horseman, and with his active habits could almost be said to have that desirable

possession—an old head upon young shoulders. In addition, he had been a strong ally of poor Collings, and from him had learned much both of the routine of the kennel and of those intricacies of the chase which are patent only to those who know where to look for them and who have a personal acquaintance with the individuals composing the pack. Above all, he was, in the words of Beckford, "fond of the diversion and indefatigable in the pursuit of it." He also had a good knowledge of the country and was well known and well liked by the natives. With these advantages, it was not surprising to those who knew Mr. Rendell to find him settling down quietly and naturally in his new vocation. He shewed a natural aptitude for the work and turned out a capital huntsman, quick, yet steady, always with his hounds and very observant of their movements, and shewing also considerable knowledge of the habits of the fox. He could use his voice in the woodlands, but, like all huntsmen of experience, was chary of its use on the moor where the chatter of the field alone will disturb a fox a mile away down-wind. I have heard one of the oldest sportsmen in the country, and a good judge to boot, declare that he never saw anything better than Mr. Rendell's style in drawing the open moor: his hounds not spreading too far, and one whipper-in wide on each side of him. The whole pack then had a chance of getting away in a body, often "right on the back" of a fox, and fast and furious was the burst that would follow. Mr. Rendell took up his residence at Tor Newton House, a central position about a mile distant from the kennels at Pulsford Hills. He was so fortunate as to have a wife in thorough sympathy with his tastes. Mrs. Rendell was herself keenly interested in the sport

and in the well-being of the South Devon country, and was a regular follower of the pack.

Steartfield, Mr. Singer's house at Paignton, was inconveniently situated as regards a great deal of the country. About this time the Leighon Estate, in the parish of Ilsington, came into the market. It was situated on the edge of the moor and comprised some fifteen hundred acres, including the Heytor valley, beloved of foxes, and a pleasant residence at its northern extremity. With the twofold object of the interests of the hunt and his convenience as master, Mr. Singer bought the estate; and, though his own convenience was better served by the development of motor-cars that soon followed, the advantages to the hunt from his ownership of this property has ever since been very great. He was also the owner of Blagdon Barton, near Paignton, a favourite fixture for the pack in his time and one where a quick find was usually a certainty, as it still is, thanks in no small measure to the present excellent tenant, Mr. Coaker. The shooting, too, of the great woodlands of Berry was at this time in the hands of the M.F.H., a fact which contributed in no small measure to the sport in that part of the country.

Mr. Rendell had two excellent assistants in William Cole, from the Dartmoor, as kennel-huntsman and first whip, and Harry Thompson, from the Blackmore Vale, as second whip, and the three worked together with a harmony not always found where professionals have to minister to an amateur. Huntsman and whips were well mounted, and the turn-out was workmanlike and smart without any ostentation or useless extravagance.

Among the best of the hunt horses, or those owned by Mr. Rendell, were Peter, an Irish horse bought

from the late Mr. " Jemmy " Deacon, a wonder both over the moor and in-country and never known to tire ; Speedwell, from the Eggesford hunt stables ; Goldfinch, bred by Mrs. Rendell, and Miss May, bought from Mr. Richard Ferris of Capton who bred her. Of the last mentioned, Mr. Rendell says she could be trusted always to get to or live with hounds and she never tired. Mr. Ferris, though eighty-eight years of age, is still riding clean-bred ones ! This is evidently the fruit of early habit, for he won a race over three miles of country when only twelve years old.

The pack, at the outset, numbered forty-one couple. It was strengthened during the first season by the addition of the Four Burrow dog-pack, numbering twenty-five couple and a half, purchased from that well-known judge of what a foxhound should be, Mr. John Williams of Scorrier. The master thus had plenty of material to work upon, and by the beginning of the second season the pack had been drafted down to forty-five couple, comprising an equal number of each sex and hunted as two packs ; amply sufficient for three days a week.

Of the Four Burrow lot, Vagrant, by the Grafton Woodman out of the Four Burrow Vanity, was perhaps the most fancied, and was very freely used in the kennel. Mr. Singer also had a lot of very good hounds from the North Staffordshire and found the Grove and the Badminton very good kennels to visit.

Having suffered during his partnership with Mr. Vicary from lack of support from the Haldon side and from difficulty in getting access to coverts there, in consequence of many of the shootings being let, Mr. Singer decided not to hunt the Haldon side during his first season as sole master. That country,

or, rather, so much of it as was not included in the loan made to the joint-masters of the Mid-Devon in 1897,[1] was accordingly loaned for one season to Mr. Morris, the then master of the Tremlett, a hunt now extinct. But the arrangement was completed too late in the year to be of much service to Mr. Morris, and, when he retired at the end of that season, the Haldon side reverted to Mr. Singer, who visited it occasionally in his second season. In his third season, an attempt was made to improve on this arrangement, but the effort did not meet with sufficient encouragement, and, consequently, during the season 1904–5 the Haldon side was not hunted. In the following year, Mr. Singer revived the attempt and continued to put in a few days on that side in each successive season. One great drawback was the increasing number of wild fallow deer on and around Great Haldon. They originated from deer escaped from a park, whether Ugbrooke, Powderham or Oxton is uncertain. They have now become so numerous that last year (1915) I counted twenty-three deer *in one herd alone*. Hounds that are quiet enough in a park will oftentimes break away after deer in the open, or in woodlands, and, in such a steep and heavily wooded country as the Haldon side, it is rarely possible for the hunt staff to get to their heads to stop them.

Nevertheless, some useful days were put in on Haldon, as, for example, when the pack met at Ware Cross, Kingsteignton, on the 21st December, 1905. The morning fox from Kingswood provided a capital thirty minutes before he went to ground in Tower

[1] See p. 230. The loan of this part of the Haldon side terminated on Mr. Spiller's retirement from the mastership of the Mid-Devon Hounds in the spring of 1902.

Plantation, after visiting all Captain Templer's coverts and then crossing Little Haldon. The second fox kept the pack hard at it for an hour and twelve minutes, and then he too went to earth in Lidwell drain and paid the penalty. The day was fast closing in when the first fox was taken out and put down on Little Haldon. He made the most of his opportunities and the hounds were stopped in Luscombe after twenty minutes, it being then five o'clock and quite dark.

If circumstances militated against continued success on the Haldon side, a great deal of excellent sport was obtained on the other side of the Teign. Here are some samples :

1902, March 10th. Granite Lodge, Stover. A good run from Staplehill over the enclosed country by Hobbin, Chercombe Bridge, Whiterock, Westwoods and Two Mile Oak, changing there to a vixen.

April 15th. Natsworthy. A first-class gallop from Hamildon Beacon to Coal Mire, over Blackaton Newtake by Coombe Farm, Bag Park Plantation and Pitton Farm, across the Widdicombe Valley, over Honey Bag Tor by Hedge Barton to Houndtor Rocks and on to Hayne Down and Bowerman's Nose, where they killed in the open after the fox had gone into the rocks and come out again. Thirty minutes at a racing pace. Mr. Rendell, riding Peter, and Cole were the only two who could live with the pack.

A very good in-country day and one to test the hunting powers of the pack was that of the 14th March, 1903, the fixture being Granite Lodge, Stover. The first fox kept the pack busy for an hour and fifteen minutes and ran through all the Stover coverts and those of Miss Divett, before he was killed near the Heathfield Potteries. Another from Custreet

went away by Staplehill to Stover and over the railway to Indio, being ultimately earthed near where he was found after one hour and fifty minutes' solid hunting.

From Natsworthy, we had a grand run on the 21st November, 1903, with a fox that stole away unseen from the top of Hamildon. The pack crossed the road and valley and ran over Challacombe hill to Birch Tor. Then left-handed through the old mine workings and the whole length of Sousand Warren to Runnage, over Merripit Hill to Stannon Tor, and on to Ladchill, where a short check occurred. Being soon righted, hounds ran over the boggy country as if for Stat's Hill, where the fox turned down wind over Hartland Tor to Post Bridge and Dury and was pulled down in the open within a field of Belliver Bridge after one hour and twenty-five minutes. The greater part of this run was in the teeth of a north-westerly gale. There was a rare scent.

The 12th March, 1904, provided a magnificent day's sport, finishing up with the run of the season, perhaps of many seasons. The place of meeting was Manaton Green, and a fox from Hayne Down was first hunted unsuccessfully for thirty minutes. Another, that was raked up on the Heatree side of King Tor, out of a patch of heather through which four or five of the field had just ridden, popped into the earths at Heathercombe. The great run began from Grim Tor in the afternoon, and the pack led us over the hill of Challacombe, past the Golden Dagger Mine and Sousand Warren, crossed the Princetown road and entered the Mid-Devon country. Caroline Bog was passed on our left, Fernworthy Newtake and Assycombe hill crossed at great speed, and Teignhead Farm reached. From here, the line led

over Manga straight to the very top of Steeperton, on to Nack Mine and Oke Tor, and across Scadbottom to East Mill Tor; then, leaving Hartor Farm to the right, up the stream to West Mill Tor and Rough Tor, where the fox got to ground within a quarter of a mile of the Okehampton Artillery Camp. Time, one hour and three-quarters. A twelve-mile point, measured on the map, and quite fifteen as hounds ran; all of it on the moor and, for the most part, over excellent going. But though we never got on to the bogs proper, there were two or three miles of very nerve-racking ground in the latter half of the run, and the number that persevered after Teignhead and reached the end was but eight all told, amongst them, in addition to the staff, being Mr. W. R. Vicary, Mr. L. G. Vicary, Mr. Frank Thomas, riding Mrs. Rendell's Old Lol, and Mr. Spiller, who piloted the field after the Mid-Devon country had been fairly invaded. Mr. Rendell and the pack had thirty miles back to kennel, which they reached at 10.35, having left home in the morning at 8.30.

A red-letter day was the 29th of the same month. There was a tremendous scent, and hounds raced a fox from Warren Inn to Riddon Mire, Belliver, Arch Tor, Rough Tor and the bogs beyond, where they killed: ten miles in an hour and twenty minutes. When crossing Riddon Mire, the pack divided and one half went away with a fresh fox to Cator and Corndon Tor and killed him at Corndon Ford Farm in a stable. Dalesman roared at him in the manger like a lion. This was a race from start to finish and occupied thirty-five minutes.

Given weather, one is generally sure of sport from Widdicombe-in-the-Moor, but rarely has that fixture provided a better day than on the 6th April, 1904,

MR. WILLIAM RENDELL

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beginning with thirty minutes to ground from Coal Mire to Bunhill Rocks and finishing with a great hunt of an hour and forty-five minutes, first, all over Hamildon and then away to Hemstone Rocks, Sittaford Tor, Whitehorse Hill and Dart Head, where hounds earthed their fox within half a mile of Cranmere Pool. This was a very hard day for horses, the moor being very wet, and some of the ground was very bad indeed.

In the following season, Widdicombe was again the trysting place on the occasion of another really great day, the 14th of January, 1905.

The morning kept us fully occupied with a run of forty-five minutes from Bag Park over Hamildon by Blackaton, Corndon Tor, Yar Tor and Cupboard Holt, to earth in the Dartmoor country under Cumpston Tor, followed by a quick circular fifteen minutes around Challacombe to ground. This alone would have sent us home satisfied, but more was in store.

The run of the day may be said to have begun at Warren Inn, where a moved fox had crossed the road with something like a ten-minutes' start, a big handicap with a Dartmoor afternoon fox. Leaving King's Oven on the right, they ran over Fernworthy Little Newtake, Assycombe Hill, Hemstone Bog and Hill, into Teignhead Newtake and on to Sittaford Tor. From here the fox took a big ring by Varracombe bottom, Whitehorse Hill, Dart Head and Stat's Hill. He was viewed scarcely a hundred yards before the pack, but was headed at Sittaford Tor, which caused a check that saved his life, though he was not given up until Fernworthy was reached. The run was very fast until the fatal check. I know one of the field who got as far as the R.A. signalling post on Whitehorse Hill and there climbed to the top

of the flagstaff in the hope of again seeing the vanished pack. In the failing light of a winter's afternoon the scene from that elevation was one of utter desolation. There was neither sign nor sound of any living thing, and nothing was left but to get the tired horse off the moor while the light served, and then to Chagford to claim a night's hospitality for the beast from Mr. Spiller.

Two brilliant gallops fell to the lot of the pack during the Hunt Week that season.

The first, on the 6th April, 1905, ended, after fifty-five minutes with barely a check, with a kill in the open at Scobitor. The fox was found in the old mine workings under Birch Tor and took us over Headland and Challacombe Warrens, up to the top of Hamildon and down the other side by Wood Pitts and Stone Farm; across the Widdicombe valley by Honeybag Tor and Holwell Tor to White Gate, thence through Newhouse Mire to Scobitor.

The second took place on the 8th of the same month, the fixture being Warren Inn, to draw by invitation the country hunted by the Mid-Devon, of which Mr. Spiller was at that time master. This run was very fast throughout, and lasted forty-seven minutes, at the end of which the fox went to ground in Fernworthy Newtake near the spot where he had been found. The run was in a ring, and the points touched were Hemstone Rocks, Metherell Bog, Lakeland, Birch Tor, Caroline Mine, White Ridge and Assycombe Hill.

A hard day, and one of interest in many respects, was the 12th September, 1905. The pack met at 7 a.m. at Challacombe, the place after which Mr. Singer had christened the horse that won the St. Leger for him the day after that of which I

write. That the master was fairly confident of victory may be inferred from his answer to Mr. Rendell's question as to when they would meet again: "Not until after I have won the Leger!"

A litter of cubs was rattled about Birch Tor and a mangy one disposed of. Then another, similarly afflicted, took a ring from Sousand by Warren Inn and back, and then by Grendon, Cator and Riddon Mire to Snailshouse and Laughter Tor and back to Belliver Bridge and Pizwell Bog, where the pack unluckily changed on to a fresh one, crossed the Moreton road and ran to Stannon and Hartland Tor, where, as he was pointing for the bogs, hounds were stopped. Mr. Rendell had left home that morning at 4.20 and got back at four o'clock in the afternoon. This was a hard day so early in the season, especially for the eight couple of young hounds out. Only one of these was missing at the end, and she turned up three hours later. In the course of the run, the Dart was crossed three times, and the hounds ran into four countries—the South Devon, Dartmoor, Mid-Devon and Lamerton.

Another red-letter day, and one that shews that hounds could give a good account of themselves in the in-country as well as on the moor, was the 14th December, 1905, when they met at Huxhams Cross. The pack literally raced from North Wood across the Huxhams Cross—Staverton Bridge road, up by the river to Hood Bridge and Hood Ball, to Velwell and Higher Velwell, to Long Lane below Three Gates, past Allerton House, to the left over Whiteley and back over the brook to Yarner Beacon nearly to Lownard; then to Bellamy and up the valley to Westcombe, on to Cames Down Barn, into the Dartmoor country and by Rattery Lane and Bulka-

more Farm to Luscombe Wood. From there the pack flew down the valley below Brounston to Velwell House and Wood Copse to ground. The time was sixty minutes, and the pace terrific throughout. Mr. Rendell, who rode two horses, Ladybird and Peter, almost to a standstill, considers it the fastest in-country run for the time occupied that he ever saw. Hounds were several times in the same field with their fox. It is uncertain whether they changed, but one may at least doubt whether the stoutest fox could have stood before them so long at the pace. The field were "spread-eagled," though some of them nicked in from time to time at the turns.

Here is a note of a run that Mr. Rendell considers to have been the best he ever saw—and that is no faint praise.

Saturday, 10th March, 1906. Manaton. Find in Luckern Valley. After being headed and getting a start, the fox makes his point for Eastdon Down, passes Gratnar and dips down the valley under Shapeley Farm and over the enclosures to Moor Gate; there he turns first left-handed over Shapeley Common and then to the right and crosses the Moreton road. Up to this point, hounds have had to hunt the line over burnt commons and ploughed fields, flinging themselves for'ard all the time. Now they are on virgin soil and able to run in earnest. They fly over Bush Down to the Lakeland valley, climb Hurston Ridge, leave Fernworthy Newtake to their right and scream over Stannon and White Ridge, breaking the wall into Teignhead Newtake and running by Grey Wethers to Sittaford Tor and the bogs beyond, as if for Broadmarsh and Fur Tor. But the pace is too good up-wind, and the fox turns down the Varracombe bottom to Teignhead Cottage,

crosses the North Teign to Stonetor and Shovel Down, and is rolled over in the open at Batworthy close under Kestor Rock. Time, one hour and fifty-seven minutes. The point, as the crow flies, from Luckern holts to Stat's Hill is eight miles; from Stat's Hill to Batworthy four miles; as hounds ran, rather over fourteen.

The finish of this run was just spoilt for most of the field through the fog that hung in patches and caused us to miss the hounds when they turned before the end, with the result that only Messrs. W. R. Vicary and L. G. Vicary with the huntsman and second whip were there to see the fox broken up. Mrs. W. Rendell, riding Old Lol, went well through this run. Only one hound, little Bertha, was left out, and she returned to kennels next day.

The most terrific burst that I remember was one of twenty-two minutes, on the 7th April, 1906, killing in the open. Those who know the stamina of a Dartmoor fox will appreciate what that means. This fox was lying on a naked patch of newly-swaled ground on Assycombe Hill. Our being over the border is accounted for by its being the Hunt Week. The pack got away close to his brush, raced over White Ridge to Sittaford Tor, turned left-handed, and killed in Ladle Bottom. Every one, with the exception of Mr. W. Rendell, was outpaced; but Mr. G. H. Hext, riding the chord of the arc, was the first there to pick up the fox.

The dog pack had a first-rate hunt of an hour and five minutes, the greater part of which was in the in-country, on the 11th December, 1906, with one of a brace found in Whiddon Brake after meeting at Goodstone Gate. Rushlade and Pensland Valley, Welstor Farm and Buckland Beacon came in the

line, which then lay past Newhouse Mire and Bagtor Mire to Mill Wood and Burchanger; the pack then crossed the Bickington road to the Heytor Hotel, leaving Ilsington Vicarage on the left, and ran into the fox close to Narrowcombe House.

The runs noted above do not by any means exhaust those of exceptional excellence, but they suffice as examples of such as rank as first-class. Many were the good days, and many the fair days, which, after all, go to make up the sum of a season's enjoyment.

A unique and somewhat dramatic finish to a fast, but twisting, run of forty minutes around Heytor, Rippon Tor, Bagtor and Pinchaford, occurred on the 12th February, 1907. The fox eventually climbed to the top of the southernmost of the two big rocks at Heytor and was killed on its very summit.

The presence of wild red deer in Buckland Woods having again been reported in the year 1903, Mr. Singer invited Mr. E. A. V. Stanley to bring the Quantock Staghounds down to hunt them early in April. Mr. Stanley stayed at Leighon with the master, and the pack met on the 7th April at the Heytor Hotel, Ilsington. One stag was roused in Buckland but quickly vanished, and the rest of the day was spent in the vain endeavour to find another.

At this time the Moor Week, or South Devon Hunt Week, which had come into vogue during Dr. Gaye's mastership, was a flourishing institution at the end of each season. It has fallen somewhat into desuetude of recent years, but in Mr. Singer's time it was a very enjoyable affair. Neighbouring packs, usually the Dartmoor or the Mid-Devon, came by invitation to make up, with the South Devon, a full week's hunting on the moor. Sometimes a pack would come from further afield. The Cattistock, under Mr. Chandos-

Pole; the Tremlett, under Sir John Shelley; the Exmoor, under Mr. Brunskill, and the Silverton, under Mr. Pape, and I think also the Lamerton, have at one time or another added variety to the Week. These gatherings drew together the keenest men from the several hunts, and there was just sufficient friendly rivalry between them to bring out the best qualities of all. It was a case of:

> "Eager and emulous only; not spiteful,
> Grudging no friend tho' ourselves he may beat,
> Just enough danger to make sport delightful,
> Toil just sufficient to make slumber sweet."

At the beginning of the season 1902–3 certain correspondence took place between the South Devon Hunt and the Dartmoor Hunt with reference to the Curtisknowle coverts and Woodleigh Woods, forming part of the country formerly hunted by Sir Henry Seale. Both hunts claimed these particular coverts as within their borders. In the month of May following, a meeting took place at Plymouth at which were present, on behalf of the Dartmoor Hunt, Mr. Martin and Mr. Mackworth Parker and Mr. Crake the honorary secretary, and, as representing the South Devon, Mr. Hext and Mr. W. Rendell. At this meeting, Sir Henry Seale's letter of the 12th August, 1846, referred to in an earlier chapter,[1] was produced and also a letter of the 16th June, 1877, from Mr. Hare of Curtisknowle to Admiral Parker. The members of the Dartmoor Hunt relied on these two letters as proving the claim of that hunt to the country in question. An arrangement was arrived at, and Mr. Singer hunted the country in question from 1902 to 1907.

[1] See p. 81.

One of the hardest and best days in this particular country was the 13th December, 1906, from Curtisknowle. The bitch pack found at 12.35 and ran till 3.15, running twice through the Woodleigh and Titcombe Woods. All the horses were done up.

In October, 1903, Mr. Lucius Vicary was elected honorary secretary in succession to Mr. G. H. Hext, who resigned after having served the hunt for over twenty years in that capacity. At a dinner given to Mr. Hext by members of the hunt on the 9th December, he was presented with a very handsome silver tea-tray bearing his crest and the legend: "Presented to George Hawkins Hext by Members of the South Devon Hunt as a memento of his valuable services as Honorary Secretary from 1883–1903."

Mr. Singer made himself much liked by everyone connected with the hunt. His manner with his field was ever quiet and courteous, though he could be firm when occasion arose. On the only occasion on which I ever heard him "blow up" anybody, he happened to pitch upon the wrong man, who, however, readily adopted the master's suggestion of setting off the reprimand against some other occasion when it had doubtless been well earned.

Some followers of the pack have already been named in these pages. The following additions to the field occurred during the decade 1897–1907. Major S. Belfield, who rented Ogwell for two or three years; Miss Brereton, Mr. C. M. Barran, Miss Barran, Mr. A. Densham, Mr. Leigh Densham, for many years master of the Dart Vale Harriers, and Mrs. L. Densham, Mr. J. F. G. Froes, Mr. G. M. Fleming, Major Jephson, Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, and Mr. W. Barnes (on the Haldon side); Mr. F. Hemstead, Captain Alers Hankey and Mrs. Hankey, Mr. H. E.

Alers Hankey, Miss Hankey, Captain J. G. B. Lethbridge, always in front despite the loss of the whole of his right arm; Mr. F. S. B. Lethbridge, Messrs. J. A. MacLellan, Mann, R. W. Matthew, R. Menneer, H. B. Peacock, the Hon. Mrs. Jervoise-Smith, Mrs. Cave-Penny, Mrs. Froude, Colonel Patch and his son Mr. J. Patch, Captain Phillpotts, R.N., Messrs. C. J. Swears, F. Wilkins and E. W. Scratton. The last-named became later master of the Haldon Harriers.

All was going merrily and well, when the news of Mr. Singer's resignation came upon the hunt with the suddenness of a thunderclap. It was known that his doctor had insisted upon his wintering abroad instead of hunting during the season 1906–7; but the master had expressed the hope and belief, which was shared by all, that he would be able to take the field again the following year. His decision to give up at the end of the season was received in the latter part of February, 1907, and the committee at once cabled in reply begging him to reconsider it. This, to the great regret of all, he was unable to do, and at a well-attended meeting of the members held on the 13th March, 1907, a resolution was unanimously passed accepting with the greatest regret Mr. Singer's resignation of the mastership and thanking him most earnestly for the very efficient manner in which he had carried out his duties as master. The resolution went on to say that the members present desired, on behalf of the whole hunt, to express their gratitude for his most generous and sportsmanlike conduct in hunting the country as he had done, and the sincere wish of one and all for his speedy and permanent recovery of good health. It was also then and there decided to make him a presentation in recognition of his able and generous services as master. Accord-

ingly, in due course, on the 8th October, 1907, the presentation was made by Lord Clifford at a dinner given to Mr. Singer by the members at the Globe Hotel at Newton Abbot, at which Mr. Robert Vicary, Mr. Singer's former colleague and at that time chairman of the hunt committee, presided.

The gift consisted of a very beautiful silver Augsburg cup with the inscription: "Presented to Washington M. G. Singer, Esquire, on his retirement from the Mastership of the South Devon Foxhounds, by the Members of the Hunt as a token of their regard and esteem. July, 1907."[1]

Many complimentary things were said about the retiring master and the speeches were obviously sincere, for there was no mistaking the genuine and universal regret at parting with one who had served the hunt so well.

[1] The presentation was originally fixed for July.

MR. AND MRS. H. F. BRUNSKILL AND THE PACK

Photo by Elliot and Fry

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CHAPTER XXII

MR. HUBERT F. BRUNSKILL: 1907–13

Terms of agreement to hunt the country—Brings his own pack—Mr. Singer's Hounds sold at Rugby—Mr. Brunskill: a Devonshire man—Early days—Successively master of the Exmoor and the Silverton—As a huntsman—His hounds—Interest in the Kennel—Success at shows—Favourite blood—A large young entry—Viceroy—Develops Sir Henry Seale's old country—Permission to the Haldon Harriers to hunt foxes on Haldon—Loans of country: Haldon to the Silverton; Canonteign to the Mid-Devon—Hunt ball inaugurated—Agrees to hunt the country for a further five years—Mrs. Brunskill: her knowledge of the sport; leads the field—Mr. L. G. Vicary succeeded by Major Cobham as hon. sec.—An admirable secretary—Roger Hannaford—Notes of sport—Good runs—Disaffection in the hunt—Harmony restored—Change in the constitution of the hunt—New rules adopted—The master resigns—Presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Brunskill—Sale of hounds.

"'Pray, gentlemen, restrain your pace,
Do give my hounds a little space,
Just room to turn; pray check your rein,
Then catch them if you can again.'
Vain is the prayer: 'twere easier far
To stem the rolling tide of war."

(*Dartmoor Days.*)

IT so happened that Mr. Singer's resignation coincided with that of Mr. Brunskill, who had just completed one season as master of the Silverton.

Mr. Brunskill then offered to hunt the South Devon country two days a week on a guarantee of £500 per annum (which sum was to include all field expenses) and kennels rent-free, with a stipulation that a five-shilling "cap" for non-subscribers should be established. On those terms he was elected master at a general meeting held on the 13th March, 1907. The hunt was thus fortunate in

avoiding an interregnum. As Mr. Brunskill brought his own pack of hounds, Mr. Singer disposed of his at Rugby in the spring.

The new master was a Devonshire man and no stranger to the country. His own property, Buckland-Tout-Saints, is situated within its limits, and, though hunting mostly with the Dartmoor when at home, he had often been one of a South Devon field. He was also well known throughout the county as a good cricketer, having taken up the game with enthusiasm first at Clifton College and afterwards at Exeter College, Oxford. Hunting came as a natural instinct to him, for he first began to follow hounds at the age of seven years, and never afterwards lost an opportunity of getting out with any pack that happened to be within his reach. His earliest experience of carrying the horn was acquired with a pack of beagles when a boy; later, he kept and hunted the South Pool Harriers. In 1905 he became master of the Exmoor Foxhounds and in the following season transferred his pack to the Silverton country. Being young and keen, he naturally hunted the hounds himself and continued to do so when he came to the South Devon.

It is not given to every young huntsman, who is a light-weight and a good rider, to restrain his impetuosity and a natural ambition to right his hounds quickly when at fault; but Mr. Brunskill was more partial to letting his hounds hunt the line than to casting them, being, perhaps, of the same opinion as the old Irish huntsman who rebuked his young master with the remark: "My lord, the most ignorant young hound in the pack knows a great deal more about hunting than you or I." As a consequence, Mr. Brunskill's hounds were expert at

extricating themselves from difficulties without assistance, which, in a country like ours, is of great importance. This does not mean that Mr. Brunskill did not always lead his field—and not infrequently outpaced them altogether on the moor—but there are times in most countries (and they occur often in Devonshire) when, from the nature of the country, the pack gets out of reach of its huntsman, however resolute a rider he may be.

Another essential quality, one that Mr. Milne puts as the first requisite in a hound, is tongue, and this the pack had in a marked degree. When at fault, the master let his hounds cast themselves in silence, so that, when out of his reach, they did not miss the words of encouragement indulged in by some practitioners. He had a good voice and his note on the horn was remarkable for tone and power and variety of expression. I do not think I ever heard a better performer, not even excepting the late Charles Littleworth.

The master took tremendous interest in his kennel and had that enviable quality "a good eye" for a hound. He was a regular visitor to Peterborough and always sought for the best blood obtainable with a view to building up a really good pack of hounds. In this he certainly succeeded, and the proof may be found in the prices realized when the pack came to be sold. To accomplish this, however, a strong body of young hounds is necessary, and there is always the risk of their number being kept up to the detriment of that of the third and fourth season hunters.

Mr. Brunskill did well at the West of England Hound Show held at Exeter in 1912. The entries were open to the counties of Dorset, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, Gloucester and Wiltshire, and

the competition was keen, the following kennels being represented: Blackmore Vale, Mr. Scott Brown's, East Devon, South Devon, South Dorset, Eggesford, West Somerset and V.W.H. (Cricklade). The South Devon won a first with Trophy, two seconds with Viceroy, a second with Viceroy and Benedict, a second with Speedy and Sunflower, and a second with Gaylass and Gaily. Always, as Mr. Brunskill says, not quite good enough to win, but always quite good enough in their work.

The pack averaged in number from forty-three couple and a half to forty-six couple and a half. The master kept up its strength by breeding extensively, having recourse chiefly to the blood of the Brocklesby, Badminton and Atherstone kennels and, later, that of the Cattistock.

At his first puppy-judging in February, 1908, thirty-two couple and a half out of forty-two couple put out to walk came under the eye of the judges, Mr. Unwin (Tiverton) and Captain Kinglake (Taunton Vale). Of these, nine couple were by the Brocklesby dogs Dealer (1904) or Vanguard (1904). A good-looking son of the latter, named Pirate, from Passion, a charming bitch from the South Cheshire kennels, took first prize for dogs. Lavender, by the Tiverton Sportsman out of Likely from the Wentworth, was considered the best of the bitches.

Probably the best hound Mr. Brunskill bred while he had the South Devon, was Viceroy (1911), by Vagabond (1909). The last-named was by the notorious Atherstone Villager (1902). Viceroy was an excellent dog to hunt and, as has already been seen, was no discredit to the kennel at a hound show. Besides winning many prizes, he got a lot of good whelps. Lord Furness of the York and Anisby

bought Viceroy at the Rugby sale and has had great success with him.

Although only pledged to two days a week, the new master, like his predecessor, hunted three days regularly. Mr. Singer had renewed the cultivation of the lower side of the country, "Sir Henry Seale's old country" as it is sometimes called. That being Mr. Brunskill's home country, he very naturally set himself to develop it, and the extra day, the Thursday, generally found hounds in that part. With such a wide territory at his disposal, Mr. Brunskill had no use for the Haldon side, and, accordingly, the committee, subject to certain safeguards, acceded to the request of the then master of the Haldon Harriers, Mr. Ernest Studd, a son of Mr. E. F. Studd of Oxton, to be allowed to keep the foxes moving on Haldon. From one cause and another, the harriers did not make much use of the permission, and in January, 1909, the Haldon side was formally loaned by the year to the Silverton Hunt, then under the joint-mastership of Messrs. C. L. Wilcocks and H. G. Rew and hunted by Mr. A. G. Pape, who, a few years later, succeeded those gentlemen in the mastership. This arrangement has been renewed annually from that time to the present, a reservation of a right for the South Devon to draw the Lindridge, Luscombe and Ugbrooke coverts being occasionally inserted, but never yet acted upon. As the Silverton did not want that part of the Haldon country that lies west of the River Teign, this portion, which comprised the Hennock and Canonteign country, was in 1910 loaned for a year to the Mid-Devon, of which Colonel Carter was at that time master, and the loan has from time to time been renewed. Colonel Carter was also to be allowed what some would consider the rather

questionable privilege of drawing Lustleigh Cleave from time to time by arrangement with Mr. Brunskill.

A new departure, originating with the new master, was the inauguration of a Hunt Ball, which has since become a regular annual institution and is held sometimes at Newton Abbot and sometimes at Torquay.

At the end of Mr. Brunskill's first season, the hunt found itself in the unwonted position of having a sum of £100 to the good. With a prodigality that the committee had cause to repent at the end of the following season, when the normal condition of affairs, shewing a considerable deficit, was restored, this sum was handed to the master on the understanding that he would continue to hunt the country for another five seasons.

Mrs. Brunskill was a valuable ally of her husband and of great assistance to him both in and out of the field. She was a dashing rider and a good horsewoman, qualities not necessarily inseparable, and, in addition, she knew every point in the game, and was far quicker than most of the field at seeing what should be done and doing it. All this, without ever detracting from that womanliness that, say what they will, in their hearts men love. A soft word and a gentle smile from her smoothed many a ruffled feather. Although handicapped by having to wear glasses, she always managed to keep in the first flight. This was particularly noticeable on a certain occasion when the pack raced a fox to death in twenty-three minutes from Bag Park to Beetor, under the bewildering conditions of a thick fog and a blinding snowstorm in our faces all the way. The pack and the master were soon out of sight, and the rest of the field were glad to follow Mrs. Brunskill's

lead, wondering the while how she managed to keep it. Mr. Brunskill's son and daughter have inherited their parents' love of the chase and receive every encouragement in its indulgence.

In the year 1910, owing to increasing business demands on the time of the honorary secretary, Mr. L. G. Vicary, who had done excellent service since his appointment to the post, Mrs. Brunskill was appointed to act as his assistant. Two years later this arrangement was superseded, on the retirement of Mr. L. G. Vicary, by the appointment of Major H. W. Cobham to the office. Major Cobham had only been a comparatively short time in the country and had settled at Ashburton. He hunted regularly himself and soon got into touch with all classes in the hunt. There is generally a difficulty in getting a man of leisure to find time for anything, but the new honorary secretary was an exception. Besides being businesslike, he was thorough and tactful and made an admirable secretary.

One of the familiars of the hunt for many years was old Roger Hannaford, a labourer on the Buckland Estate, who looked after the earthstopping on that side of the moor. He wore an old pink coat and a velvet hunting-cap, and when long past seventy years of age would walk many miles to meet hounds, and many more in charge of the terriers during the day, returning home on foot after the sport was over. It was wonderful how he would turn up when the terriers were wanted and when one thought he had been left miles away. He always attended the keeper's dinner, and ate everything with his knife, which he handled with the dexterity of a juggler. There was an awful fascination in watching the performance. Once I thought he was stumped when

a plateful of very juicy rhubarb tart was set before him, but the knife only flashed the faster in and out of his lips. It was rather a relief that soup was not included in the *menu*. Poor old Roger died in February, 1911, aged eighty, and over his grave in the little country churchyard at Lewsdon the members of the South Devon erected a tombstone "To commemorate many years of faithful service in pursuit of sport."

There was abundance of good sport during Mr. Brunskill's mastership; the best of it, as always in modern times, was on the moor, but there were also some good in-country runs when a fox was forthcoming on a tolerable scenting day, a combination never too frequent. The following brief notes will give an idea of some of the good days, of which there were many more than it is possible to notice here.

1907, November 5th. Grendon. After putting one to ground, found an old dog-fox on Grendon Common; took a big turn round Grendon Lodge and went away over Riddon Mire, Riddon Ridge, Belliver Tor, Smith's Hill, Prince Hall, Tor Royal Newtake and the Turf-ties and killed in Tor Royal Plantation after one hour and thirty minutes. An eight-mile point.

Sir Henry Seale's old country was the scene of an excellent in-country hunt on the 19th December in the same year, when the pack met at Capton. A quick find below Dreyton resulted in a short run to Capton Water, where complications put an end to the pursuit. Then followed a run from Capton into Coombe, Kingston Brakes by Capton Village to Dreyton and Oldstone; from there to Dinnicombe and on to Blackawton Forces and Allaleigh, and the fox, an old vixen, went to ground in a rabbit hole on

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UNDER BIRCH TOR

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Mr. Baker's farm, whence she was soon taken out. The run occupied an hour and twenty-five minutes.

On Christmas Eve, 1907, a slow but pretty hunt of one hour and forty minutes in the locality of Storridge and Curtisknowle, with a very poor scent, resulted in a kill near Gara Bridge. This was by no means a great or good run, but one to rejoice the heart of the master and test the patience and perseverance of the lady pack.

Many a good run fails only of being great for want of being straightened out. Of such was the run of an hour and twenty-five minutes from Challacombe on the 20th March, 1909, the points touched being Blackaton, King's Head, Coal Mires, Hamildon Beacon and John Hannaford's at Headland; Challacombe and Blackaton again, and then Biddlecombe Down and Avychurch, where the master had the satisfaction of handling his fox.

As a contrast to the above, a nine-mile point was scored ten days later when the pack opened the South Devon Hunt Week at New Bridge. Hounds got away on the back of a fox from Yar Tor, ran over Corndon Tor to Corndonford, over Jordan and back to Yar Tor, then away to Bavency and Snails House, past Belliver Bridge, and by Runnage Common to Caroline Bog in the Mid-Devon country, on over Merripit Hill and Water Hill to Chagford Common, and marked him to ground in a rabbit-hole at Hurston Farm. Time, one hour and fifteen minutes.

Widdicombe-in-the-Moor kept up its reputation for good sport on the 3rd April following. A "tough old campaigner" from the side of Hamildon opposite Challacombe piloted the pack, by way of Hookner Tor, Birch Tor, Shapcley Common and Durston to Beetor Brake and thence *into* Chagford. He left this

by way of Mr. Hayter Hames's, Chagford House, returned over the golf links to Bector, and was run into at the lower end of Chagford Common. The run lasted two and three-quarter hours, but the first part was very fast.

The Rolster Bridge fixture supplied an old-fashioned in-country hunt of three hours and a half on the 25th November, 1909. Found at Windcatt's Brake, ran hard round Crabbaton Gate, Horner Down and Plantations, back to Ashwell and round to where they found, and then on to Wagland and put him to ground in a drain opposite Mr. Simpson's Brake.

Another first-rate day in the lower part of the country was the 14th December in the same year, when the field mustered at Cornworthy. The first fox was disturbed in Capton Brake, took the pack at a good pace all round the brakes, across the bottom in the valley and through Broadridge Wood to the Farm and was run into in the valley below. Another fox, from Allaleigh, went away by the village nearly to Blackawton Forces and on to Blackdown and Boston Farm, and from there to Horner and Curtis-knowle, and hounds were whipped off at Weeldon to avoid disturbing the Thursday's draw. A point of seven miles and a half, and the whole nineteen couple up.

Something like a five-mile point in twenty-eight minutes, as straight as possible from Shapeley Tor to Kestor Rock, was a brilliant finish to a good day's sport on the 5th March, 1910. The morning had been spent among the rabbit-holes of Headland and Challacombe Warrens and the rocks of Grimspound and Birch Tor, resulting in a kill at Vitafer. It was a long ride home for all of us from Kestor.

By way of a holiday treat for the Newton folk, the pack met in the market-place of that town on the 3rd January, 1911. A capital in-country hunt of two hours and fifty minutes resulted. The country covered was from Custreet over Ingsdon and round to New Inn again, then by Bickington and Half Way House and Gale to Down Copse, on to Rising Sun and Woodland, then by Knowle and Beacon Hill to Cappa Dollar, Rock Park, Clennons, Dornafield and Rydon, where the fox beat the pack.

Despite the proximity of Lustleigh Cleave, Manaton often produces a good run, and this was the case on the 11th March, 1911, the fox being found on Hayne Down. He first went to ground in Blissamore Rocks, but bolted at once of his own accord, and then ran over Hayne Down to Heatree, through the plantations to Jay's Grave, over the enclosures past Hedge Barton to Honey Bag Tor, being killed in the open at Bunhill—one hour and five minutes with no check. The master had a nasty fall on Heatree Down, his horse stepping on his face, but he was soon going and in his accustomed place again.

A good in-country hunt, from the point of view of the field, who are not much concerned with the absence of blood at the end, was that of the 30th December, 1911. Found in Custreet and ran by Staplehill, Moor Farm, Hobbin Wood, Bearah, and Parsonage Farm to Metley Moors, Nordon and Denbury Down; thence to Wrenwell, Clennons, Stollage Common, Dornafield and Ogwell Rectory, where the fox ran them out of scent. This was a slow hunt of two-and-a-half hours, and everyone was able to see it and to be with the pack all through.

The run of the 6th April, 1912, was a particularly brilliant one, notwithstanding the wind, which was

blowing hard. The pack raced a fox from Runnage Common across the lower end of Caroline Bog to Tom Hext's gullies, up the Sousand wall, turned left to the mines and Birch Tor, down to Headland and over Hookner Tor, through Coombe enclosures to Coombe Farm, running under King Tor to Heathercombe, and killed him in the pond at Heatree after fifty-eight minutes.

Many other days there were, as good as, and better than, the above, but my aim has been to pick out runs typical of the sport in-country and "out over." One that must not be overlooked took place on the 15th February, 1913. Taking Hookner Tor and Birch Tor on his way, a fox from Hamildon, opposite Challacombe, crossed the Moreton road, and, after leading the field over the good ground of Stannon and Hartland, went on to Broadamarsh and the bogs beyond, making a point of seven miles and a distance of nine as hounds ran. The master stopped hounds at Broadamarsh at 4.40.

A small cloud is sometimes the forerunner of a severe storm. In the beginning of the year 1912, the foundations of the hunt were rudely shaken by a quarrel which owed its origin to a comparatively trivial matter, and which, but for misunderstandings, would never have occurred.

Some dissatisfaction had arisen from the lack of sport in the in-country during the previous season or two. The fact was admitted by the master as well as the members; but while he attributed the cause to the lack of foxes, there were those among the field who ascribed it to the fact that hounds seldom visited the region in question. Undoubtedly there was some reason on both sides, for the alleged causes were such as to react upon each other. If a master naturally

fights shy of a region which he thinks to be devoid of foxes, so owners of coverts will not preserve foxes in a country rarely visited by hounds. Had the matter stopped there, it would have been capable of adjustment. Unfortunately, it is to be feared that a few individuals, for reasons of their own, were ready to seize the opportunity of trying to oust the master, who, on his side, failed to locate the masked battery, and conceived the idea that the attack came from the committee. In this he was quite mistaken. From the first, the committee refused to be a party to any unhandsome treatment of him and acted throughout with all fairness, though some of the master's supporters displayed more loyalty than tact. Letters and reports of meetings appeared in the local papers under such headings as " Friction in the Hunt " and " Hunting men at loggerheads." The farmers of the hunt, good and honest fellows averse from any intrigue, stood by Mr. Brunskill to a man. Ultimately, owing in a great measure to the judicious action and conciliatory attitude of the committee, harmony was once more restored ; Mr. Brunskill's resignation was withdrawn, and he consented to continue in office.

Much of the difficulty experienced in settling these unfortunate differences arose from the lack of proper constitutions defining the membership of the hunt and determining the respective powers of members and committee. Certain isolated rules had been passed from time to time, but they had no relation to one another, were sometimes inconsistent and had become practically a dead letter. An attempt at a remedy was made by Mr. F. C. Simpson of Maypool, Churston Ferrers, one of the most enthusiastic members of the hunt, as is also his daughter Miss Simpson. He proposed a resolution, designed to

define the membership and to alter the mode of election of the committee, and this was passed at a general meeting. The attempt was well-intentioned, but the resolution did not go far enough to make the scheme workable. The committee then set to work to draw up a comprehensive code of rules. These were thoroughly threshed out, first in committee and afterwards by the members in general meeting. The result was the code of rules that, as slightly amended during the following year, will be found in one of the appendices.[1] These rules are by no means perfect; in particular, the constitution of the hunt is not framed upon the best lines possible. It was, in fact, felt to be inexpedient, in view of the existing trouble, to depart more than was absolutely necessary from the lines of Mr. Simpson's scheme, so far as concerned the qualifications for membership and election of committee, and the hunt contented itself with placing its affairs and management upon a workable footing.

The soreness that had been engendered soon passed off, for the master was the last man in the world to nurture ill-will, even where he had reason to consider that in some quarters his treatment had been ungenerous; while, on the other hand, all recognized that he was a thorough sportsman and good fellow, and that his very outspokenness, at which some took umbrage, was the surest proof of his honesty of purpose. It was with this feeling, and with the sense of the indebtedness of the hunt to Mr. Brunskill for six seasons' good sport and to Mrs. Brunskill for her help in the good cause, that the members presented them with a very handsome silver cup, when at the end of the season 1912–13, the master definitely decided to retire. The presentation was

[1] See appendix B.

made in a neat speech by the honorary secretary, Major Cobham, on behalf of the members.

Mr. Brunskill sold his hounds at Rugby with the exception of the bitches and whelps, which were disposed of privately. The total figure realized was one thousand and nine guineas. Lord Furness, at Rugby, bought three lots of two couple each for seventy, fifty-five and fifty-five guineas respectively, and two lots of two couple and a half each for sixty-five and fifty-three guineas respectively; and Mr. Morel gave fifty guineas for another lot of two couple and a half to go to France.

Mr. Brunskill's passion for hounds, however, was only to be kept in check for a short time, as will appear in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII

MAJOR J. A. COOKE HURLE: 1913–15

Strangers in the land—A Westcountryman—Ex-master of the Lamerton and New Forest Hounds—Returns to Devonshire with his own pack—Settles at Holne Cross, Ashburton—Huntsman as well as master—Activity, judgment and tact—Mrs. Hurle—Unpleasant adventure—Success at Exeter Hound Show—Agreement to waive guarantee—Renews loan of Haldon side to the Silverton—Sport during first season—Bad weather—Best in-country run of the season—Loan of Kingsbridge country to Mr. Brunskill—Second season—Guarantee—Resignation of the hon. sec.—Outbreak of the war—Gloomy outlook—Determination to keep the hunt going—Master's entire stud taken for the Army—Rejoins his regiment—Generous act of Messrs. W. and H. Whitley—Polo ponies for the hunt stables—Mr. Simpson appointed deputy-master—Reeves as huntsman—Creditable performance of his duties—Accident to Mr. W. R. Vicary—Resignation of the master—Resolution passed by the hunt.

"Of manly form and courteous mien,
Scarce fifty summers has he seen;
. . . .
He scans the field with rapid view,
And notes an absent friend or two;
Though strict to time, he loves to yield
A margin to his tardy field."

(*Dartmoor Days.*)

ALTHOUGH Devonshire folk are notoriously clannish and profess a poor opinion of "foreigners" from other counties, a stranger, once settled in Devon, is soon forgiven his nationality and received, so to speak, into the family, provided he attunes his mind and manners to those of the inhabitants.

It is a noticeable fact that of all the masters of the South Devon since its foundation, only two, Mr. Ross and Major Cooke Hurle, have come from outside the

MAJOR COOKE HURLE

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county, all the others being Devonians by either birth or adoption. Yet the two masters named are not to be classed together, for was not Major Cooke Hurle, who hailed from Somerset, a Westcountryman born, and had he not for four seasons been master of a Devonshire pack, the Lamerton, which he left in 1910 ? So that, when, after some brief negotiations, he came back to the county as the newly elected master of the South Devon, in succession to Mr. Brunskill, it never occurred to anyone to look upon him as a stranger.

After leaving the Lamerton and taking a year's rest from the labours of office as M.F.H., Major Cooke Hurle, in conjunction with his brother, now Lieut.-Colonel E. F. Cooke Hurle, took the mastership of the New Forest Hounds. When, in 1913, he came back to Devonshire from the New Forest, he brought with him a pack of thirty-five couple, composed partly of drafts from his two former packs, and engaged F. Reeves as kennel-huntsman and first whip.

For want of a house nearer the kennels, the new master settled at Holne Cross, Ashburton. He was not long in making his presence felt in the country and in getting to know and to be known by the people, who were won over at once by his frank manner and kindly consideration.

It was soon found that the hunt had a huntsman as well as a master in Major Cooke Hurle. With his previous experience of hunting hounds and a ready eye and memory for picking up a new and intricate country, he began at once to shew good sport. Although about fifty years of age, the new master had the appearance and the activity of a much younger man. He had a workmanlike pack full of hunting qualities and he placed great reliance on his

hounds; but when he helped them he was quick about it, and made his cast with judgment and decision. He was a good rider and had a surprising way of getting to his hounds in a country where that is never very easy. Ever courteous with his field, he was never ruffled, even by the disappointments and aggravations that beset a huntsman's path.

Mrs. Hurle shared her husband's love of the sport and was a frequent member of the field. She had had her share of hunting in other countries, and her experiences included the unpleasant one of being pinned down under water by her horse with a broken collar-bone!

The master's desire to have a working pack did not lead him to neglect appearances, as is shewn by his taking several prizes at Exeter Hound Show in July, 1914, including a first with Madcap in the restricted class for dogs and a first with Gaiety and Gracious, both by Viceroy, in the class for unentered bitches.

Major Cooke Hurle agreed to hunt the country two days a week; as a matter of fact, he put in a third day regularly throughout his first season, and would have continued to do so in his second season had circumstances permitted. Nevertheless, he very generously waived any guarantee for the first year on the understanding that the hunt would pay kennel rent and all field expenses and hand over any balance of the year's subscriptions to him. Having country enough for his three days without the Haldon side, the loan of that side to the Silverton was renewed.

Of the sport during Major Cooke Hurle's first season the following will give an idea.

Before the regular season began, the pack gave an example of its hunting powers by killing an old dog-

fox, with only a moderate scent to help, after a twisting run of two hours. The starting-point was Blackaton Newtake and the hunt took place on and around Hamildon and ended close to North Bovey Church. This was on the 16th October.

The season was characterized by very bad weather, including much fog and almost continuous rain and wild winds which interfered considerably with hunting. Nevertheless, there were days when good average sport was obtained. Thus, on the opening day, 1st November, at Shinners Bridge, a field of a hundred and thirty had a thirty-seven minutes' run from Peakes Copse with a kill in the open near Sandwell House; on the 24th of the same month, a two-hours' run resulted from Hamildon Beacon; at Widdicombe on the 29th a good run from Coal Mire by Bag Park, Dunstone Down and Shallowford Farm, under Corndon Tor and over Sherberton Common to Mel Tor to ground; a day of many short scurries from Heytor White Gate on the 2nd December; a busy day on the 6th at Alston Cross; a quick and straight gallop from Bag Park with a kill on Holwell Tor on the 13th and a long hunting run from near Kingstone on the 17th finishing near East Down Cross, ten miles below Totnes. On the 20th December, a quick thing from Yarner to Lustleigh Cleave was followed by an excellent run of something like twelve miles with a point of seven miles, from Leighon to Buckland Beacon, Holne Chase and Gallantry Bower. The fox went below, but was bolted and killed. Boxing Day, when the pack met at the Moorland Hotel, was a very hard day for hounds and horses. One fox was put to ground, another killed and a third lost.

Among other enjoyable days were the following:

January 26th. A very fast twenty minutes from Sharpham into the Dartmoor country to ground. January 27th. Alston Cross : from Halsanger Mire by Horridge, Bagtor Wood, Rippon Tor and Venton Mire to ground in Pixie Pits in the morning. Then a twisting run, covering some ten miles, in the locality of Bagtor Wood, Heytor, Yarner, Pinchaford and Halsanger, a change of foxes spoiling the finish. January 31st. A first-rate day from Sherril over and around Hamildon and the surrounding country, with more than one fox and ending with a kill.

Probably the best in-country run of this season, though it lacked the desired finish, was one that took place on the 5th February when the pack met at Blagdon Barton and found in the little covert below the Totnes road. The line taken was over Higher Blagdon, through Mr. Mudge's coverts and those of Mr. Winser, left-handed to Wildwoods and Westerland and thence to Aptor, over the road above Marldon Church to Brownscombe and Compton and on to Wrigwell. Difficulties arose here through the fox being headed and subsequently climbing the face of the quarry, and the pace slackened to Bulley Barton and Dainton Hill and Kerswell Down. Up to this point the run had lasted one hour and twenty minutes and the distance was seven miles between the extreme points and probably ten as hounds ran. Slow hunting followed, and the run finished at the earth by Paignton Reservoir.

On the 7th February the pack killed a brace in the Yarner district after putting in some useful work, and, on the 19th, had a good in-country hunt in the Dundridge and Sharpham country.

The perseverance of the pack was well tested on the 24th when hounds ran for three-and-a-half hours

round and round on the rocky ground between Mel Tor, Dartmeet and Sherril, " And I think," says the master, " at last drowned our fox in the Dart."

The in-country hunting finished on the 7th March with a good hunting run from Shinners Bridge. During this month hunting on the moor was twice interrupted by heavy falls of snow. In the intervals some good sport fell to the lot of the pack, notably, a good hunt from Halsanger on the 17th ; a fast twenty minutes from Cator Gate to ground opposite Brimpts on the 26th, followed on the same day by a five-and-a-quarter mile point in thirty minutes after working up to a fox at Headland Warren that had obtained a start from Langworthy Mire ; and minor successes on other days.

With better weather towards the end of the season (rough weather is more hurtful to sport on Dartmoor than elsewhere) matters improved. Two capital runs were recorded on the 11th and 13th April, the first of an hour and twenty-five minutes in the Widdicombe country, including an incursion into Mid-Devon territory ; the other, a hunting run of three hours, from Reddaford Water with a Yarner fox whose itinerary included Heytor, Leighon, Becky, Bowerman's Nose, Manaton Rocks, the whole length of Neadon Cleave and Lustleigh Cleave, Houndtor Wood, Trendlebere Down, Smallacombe Rocks and Pinchaford. Here a fresh fox took up the running by Halsanger Mire and Bagtor Mire, where the pack was stopped.

The Widdicombe fixture was responsible for the run of the season on the 25th April. Hounds get away on the back of a good Dartmoor fox on the top of King Tor, race by Coombe through Liapa to Shapeley Tor, then over the Moreton road to Lake-

land and Metherall Mire, break the Fernworthy Wall, rattle over the good going of Assycombe to Tom's Hill, and scream over the sound grass of Whiteridge, through Grey Wethers Mires to the gate into Teignhead Newtake. From here they press on to Sittaford Tor and Verracombe, and ever onward to Quintius Man and Whitehorse Hill, where they catch a view, and, after a turn down the hill, roll their fox over in the open hard by Teignhead Farmhouse. Time, just one hour, and every hound up. Owing to burnt ground and other difficulties, the pack had to be helped in the early stages of the run, but, thanks to the master's handling, no time was lost. Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. Raleigh Phillpotts, both unquestionably qualified judges, speak of this run as the best they ever saw on the moor.

A cheery gallop brought the season to a close on the 2nd of May. The pack met at Widdicombe and the run began at Sousand Warren. To Runnage Farm first, then over the Moreton road, by Caroline Bog to Hartland Tor, over the East Dart and away nearly to Cut Hill, where we were all pounded by the bogs.

At the end of the season 1913–14, Mr. Brunskill, to whose well-being a pack of hounds is apparently a necessity, applied for a loan of the lower part of the country, and although Major Cooke Hurle had not neglected that district and did not want to lose it, he felt that a separate pack would be better able to do it justice, and therefore, in the spirit of a true sportsman, consented to the loan being made by the committee. Some particulars concerning this pack, and telling how Mrs. Brunskill took command when her husband joined the Army, will be found at the end of the last chapter in this book.

Such was the success of Major Cooke Hurle's first season, that the committee had no hesitation in acceding to his reasonable demand for a guarantee of £350, in addition to kennel rent and usual field expenses amounting to some £250 more, as a term of his continuance in office. It is true that the master had, perhaps, less reason to be satisfied with the country than the hunt had cause to be pleased with him. For he was naturally inclined to measure things by the standard he was used to in the New Forest, where funds and foxes are plentiful, whereas the South Devon Hunt is content to make the most it can of a small supply of either commodity, and to remain undismayed by a record of eleven blank days in a season. One cause of regret there was, common both to master and hunt, in the loss, at the end of the season 1913–14, of the company and the services of the honorary secretary, Major Cobham, whose appointment under Government in connection with the supply of Army horses, coupled with the educational needs of his family, necessitated his moving to a larger centre. He was an admirable secretary, and it was impossible to find anyone at the moment to take his place. With this exception, all looked promising and well for the coming season, and none dreamt of the appalling catastrophe that was about to fall upon the world.

So often in years past have we watched the near approach of war-clouds upon the political horizon only to see them dissipated by the sunshine of arbitration and diplomacy, that no very especial interest attached to the reappearance of the familiar phenomenon in the summer of 1914. But, as the weeks passed, this particular cloud became bigger and blacker, and, almost before we could realize the

fact, we learned in the first days of August that war had been declared, and we found ourselves up against the might and the power and, though we knew it not then, the brutal barbarity of the German Empire.

With the hideous nightmare still upon us of eighteen months of struggle with a monster so hard to strangle, with an ever-lengthening roll of honour which includes so many young and gallant sportsmen among its bravest, and with the ever-present thought of what would happen to our own fair country and our dear ones at home should the fortunes of war, proverbially uncertain, prevail against us, it is difficult to attune one's mind to write of peaceful pursuits or to think that any can be found to take interest in what may be written. And yet, on the blackest of these dark days there is ever the fragrance of the breath of hope and a sense of a spirit of promise that tells of days yet to be, when we shall welcome home as conquerors some, at least, of those who are doing for us what we, alas ! ourselves cannot do, and when the sportsman will be able once again to ride forth without the company of that *atra cura* of whose presence behind the saddle he is so conscious to-day.

It was some such undefined feelings as these, coupled with the knowledge of the difficulty, and often impossibility, of resuscitating a hunt once abandoned, and the thought of what was due to those who should return after fighting our battles, that determined the hunts of the kingdom, and among them the South Devon, to make every effort to keep alive the sport, even though for the time there should be no hunters left to ride and but a handful of followers remaining behind to snatch an occasional day with hounds. The order therefore went forth to carry on as best might be, with the paradoxical

object of maintaining the supply of foxes by killing as many as possible, sport being quite a secondary consideration.

This is not the place to treat of the sacrifices so readily made by the hunting community in general, but it is within the scope of this work to record that the master of the South Devon was one of the first to act without waiting for a lead. He at once placed his stud, which he had been at pains and expense to replenish during the summer, at the disposal of the Army buyers. They took the whole of his ten hunters. Then the master himself was taken ; for his regiment, the North Somerset Yeomanry, was called up for active service. It was not to be his first experience of warfare ; in the Boer War his squadron had gone with one each from the West Somerset, the Devon and the Dorset, to form the 7th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

Help, however, was at hand. The brothers, Messrs. William and Herbert Whitley of Paignton, with admirable good feeling, sent their polo ponies to the hunt stables, and Mr. F. C. Simpson agreed to act as deputy-master during Major Cooke Hurle's absence. The number of hunting days a week was cut down to two, and Reeves carried the horn in place of his master.

For a whipper-in, even though he be also kennel-huntsman, to hunt the pack he has been turning to another is always something of a disadvantage. Notwithstanding this, and an assistant new to the game, with only polo ponies to ride, Reeves came through the ordeal with great credit and shewed some very good sport. The absence of a professional whip was compensated for in a considerable degree by the assistance rendered by Mr. Simpson's stud-groom, Truscott, some time whipper-in to the Calpe Hounds.

The master had a day or two with his pack this season (1914–15) when on leave. The last occasion was on the 10th April at Widdicombe, but the pleasure of seeing him amongst us again was counterbalanced by a serious accident to Mr. W. R. Vicary, whose horse put his foot in a rabbit-hole. Mr. Vicary sustained severe concussion and lay at Natsworthy Manor for ten days before recovering full consciousness. Mr. Scrimgeour and his daughter, Mrs. Duguid, did everything in their power for his care and comfort, and their neighbour, Miss Radcliffe from Bag Park, was of the greatest help in nursing. It was a very bad fall, and, hard as he is, Mr. Vicary was fortunate in getting over it as he did.

Much regret, though little surprise, was felt when, towards the end of the season 1914–15, Major Cooke Hurle announced his intention to resign. The reason of course was that he felt his duty to his country came first. To that there was nothing to be said, but the following resolution passed at a general meeting held on the 17th March, 1915, testifies to the regret of the hunt at losing so good a master :—

"That this General Meeting of the South Devon Hunt receives with the very deepest regret the announcement of the resignation of the Master, whose tact, courtesy and ability have won the goodwill of the whole country-side, and who it had been hoped would remain in office for many years ; and that the Chairman be asked to convey to Major Cooke Hurle the grateful thanks of the Members for all he has done for the Hunt during the past two seasons, and to express their appreciation of the excellent sport shewn and of the thoroughly efficient manner in which the Country has been hunted during his mastership."

MR. WILLIAM WHITLEY

MR. HERBERT WHITLEY

CHAPTER XXIV

MR. WILLIAM WHITLEY AND MR. HERBERT WHITLEY: 1915–

Varied activities of the new joint-masters—Rearrangement of hunt duties—Generous attitude of the Messrs. Whitley—Chief object of maintaining packs in war-time—New recruits to the field—Some personal notes—Hire of hunters in the country—Other packs within the South Devon borders—The Mid-Devon—The Silverton: assistance from Lord Devon and other landowners: Mr. Pape on active service—Mr. Brunskill's: Mrs. Brunskill hunts the pack in the master's absence on service—Lady masters—Hunting a school for war—Conclusion.

> "Pode and Hamlyn and Kelly are all of them good,
> But old Beaufort's your mark if you want the best blood."
> (*The Chase.* Geo. Templer.)

THE anxiety as to the future of the hunt, subsequent on the loss of its master during war-time, was of short duration. Negotiations were opened with the Messrs. William and Herbert Whitley of Barton Pines and Primley, whose generous action in placing their polo ponies at the disposal of Major Cooke Hurle when he was stripped of his whole stud, has already been mentioned. That action in itself was sufficient to stamp the brothers as sportsmen in the best sense of the word.

For some years Messrs. Whitley had identified themselves very closely with the farming interest in South Devon, and their views and influence had won respect among the agricultural community. In particular, they had devoted themselves, with marked success, to the breeding of pedigree stock of every sort.

Their successes at the last show of the Shire Horse Society, held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, in the month of February, 1916, are typical of what they have achieved with different lines elsewhere. After taking a seventh, an eighth and a fifth prize with three different exhibits, they were awarded second prize for Fascination in the class for fillies foaled in 1913, and that animal was also reserved in the competition in the Championship Class for the Cup for the best filly. At the same show their Lorna Doone carried off the first prize for mares over 16.2, five years old and upwards, the Championship Cup for the best mare and the Society's Gold Challenge Cup valued at fifty guineas and Champion Cup valued at twenty-five guineas for the best filly or mare.

The one fear entertained by the hunt committee was lest, with affairs of such magnitude already occupying their time, the Messrs. Whitley might feel unable to cope with the management of a pack hunting so large a country as the South Devon. But it is generally true that the busy man is the man who finds most time, not indeed for leisure, but for fitting in more work. The solution probably is that his life is well ordered and his time well parcelled out, none of it being wasted. The Messrs. Whitley made no secret of the fact that it would be difficult for them to devote to the sport and its ancillary duties the personal attention usually expected of a master, and they accordingly stipulated that more of the work should be undertaken by the committee. Furthermore, they organized a system of local sub-committees to deal on the spot with matters arising in different parts of the hunt. The idea is excellent and promises to be a complete success, the only drawback, due to

the exigencies of the war, being of a temporary nature.

These matters being settled, the other terms presented no difficulty. Messrs. Whitley dealt generously with the committee in the matter of a guarantee, their only anxiety being to provide sport and to preserve the hunt from the disaster that threatened it owing to the impossibility of finding a master elsewhere at such a time. By their public-spirited action the brothers have earned not only the gratitude of the present members of the hunt, but also that of succeeding generations, in that the new masters, in tiding over this time of stress and difficulty, assured the future of the sport. The hunt is also indebted to Mr. W. R. Vicary for undertaking, despite great pressure of business, the work of honorary secretary.

The new masters bought Major Cooke Hurle's pack, which remains kennelled, as heretofore, at Pulsford Hills. Reeves has been kept on as huntsman, and, though sport for the moment is of secondary importance as compared with the necessity of killing foxes (for which reason I refrain from going into particulars of runs during this mastership), he has been very successful in attaining both objects.

There have been some additions to the field of late years. Among the younger members, Miss Ainger sets a good example in keenness to the girls of the present day, an example that was followed by Miss Tinline as long as she was in the country. Mr. Arden, from Sladnor, is now serving in France, and Mr. G. Knight-Bruce is also, I believe, in khaki. Lord Hambleden, also on service abroad, does not hunt with the pack, but all the weight of his influence is applied in favour of the sport. Mrs. Blakeway was at one

time a regular follower, as was Mr. Bosworthick, and Mr. C. L. Pennell, a visitor; Mr. R. M. Bourne, who has now joined the army, and his brother, Mr. G. Bourne, are fond of the sport and helpful to the hunt. Miss Lewis goes well and is a valued member of one of the sub-committees. It is sad to have to record that Miss Dundee Hooper, a promising young follower from Torquay, has lately been taken from us.

Lieut.-Colonel W. E. T. Bolitho, D.S.O., is mostly occupied in hunting his own pack, the Western, in Cornwall—that is, in peace time, for he is now on active service—but he also has a house in the South Devon country and, when there, never fails to join the glad throng.

Mr. J. C. Chapman of Cadeleigh now rarely comes out mounted; nevertheless, he takes an active interest in the sport which is doubly welcome by reason of the large extent of shooting which he rents. He is also honorary treasurer to the Haldon Harriers. Mr. W. S. Curtis of Denbury Manor and his daughter rarely miss a day. Mr. F. F. Card comes from Newton Abbot; and Miss Collins, Waye, Ashburton, is ever ready to help the hunt.

The field do not see as much as they would wish of Mr. R. H. Lee of Yarner and his daughter, Miss Lee; but if the master of that delightful preserve is not always at home, foxes are always there as proof of his sympathy and interest. Mr. and Mrs. Petch, riding very big horses, and Dr. and Mrs. Steele, riding very little ones, come from Totnes and St. Marychurch respectively; that is to say, they did so until the call of the country took both husbands from their homes. Mr. O. Durant-Parker and Mr. H. S. Seymour not only join the field, but are also most helpful in preserving foxes at opposite ends of the country. Miss Robertson

A YOUTHFUL FOLLOWER OF THE PACK

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from Westerlands and Miss Frost from Torquay are both very keen. Mr. J. S. Trelawny really " belongs " to the Dartmoor, but is also a member of the South Devon and joins that pack when it meets within reach of him at Buckfastleigh ; and Mr. G. L. Bailey from Bovey and Mr. S. Simpson are helpful newcomers to the hunt.

There are several reliable men in the hunt who let out hunters. As they all hunt themselves, they know the sort of horse required and how to get him into condition. W. Holman of Torquay is probably the veteran, yet his nerve is as good as that of his son, Frank, while his weight and figure seem to remain as they were thirty and more years ago. The Grist family have also been settled at Torquay for a great number of years. The brothers R. J. and J. C. Collings are the present partners in a very old-established business at Exeter. F. Bulley and J. Fairweather and F. Davies of Newton Abbot, W. E. Cawdle of Torquay and E. W. Pomeroy of Teignmouth complete the list.

We have now traced the history of the South Devon Hunt through its varying fortunes down to the present day. The history, however, would be incomplete without a brief word as to neighbouring hunts operating within the borders of the South Devon.

This country at present is far too extensive to be capable of being adequately hunted by one pack, and the shrinkage that is taking place in all hunts, due to the growth of towns and other causes, works but slowly in South Devon. Meanwhile, the advantage

of the outlying portions of the country being properly hunted is considerable and deserves recognition.

To take the Mid-Devon first. This pack under the successive management of several masters, among whom Mr. S. V. Thomas, Mr. Lowndes Norton, Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. G. Spiller have been the most noteworthy, has rendered great service by relieving the older hunt from the duty of visiting such a remote part of its domains, and also by keeping the moorland foxes on the move. Any relaxation of pressure on the Mid-Devon side would undoubtedly result in foxes from further south seeking the quiet seclusion in the Vein country, to the detriment of sport on the more accessible portion of the moor. With the exception of the Fernworthy district, where the going is of the best, the Mid-Devon country is rough and wild. Nevertheless sport is often excellent. As has previously been explained,[1] the position of the Mid-Devon Hunt is that of a leaseholder for its own life of that portion of the South Devon country that it now occupies. The Mid-Devon Hunt being thus autonomous, its doings have no place in this history. It is to be hoped that its own will one day be written.

Since January, 1909, the Haldon side of the country, or the greater portion of it, has been entrusted to the Silverton. This arrangement has been most successful. When it was first started, the country was in a bad way. It had not been hunted at all during 1904–5; in the next season the South Devon were there only four times; and in 1906–7, six days only. From the end of that season until January, 1909, the country was not visited by foxhounds. In fact, the hunting interest had been almost completely squeezed out by the shooting interest.

[1] See chapter XVIII.

Great credit is due to Mr. Wilcocks and Mr. Rewe of Exeter, the then masters of the Silverton, who, with Mr. A. Pape as huntsman, worked indefatigably to resuscitate hunting in the neglected area. In this effort they were greatly helped by the landowners. Lord Devon in particular, though himself a shooting and not a hunting man, set a magnificent example and was at great pains to restore a head of foxes at and around Powderham. Lord Devon was backed up by Lord Clifford, Sir Robert Newman, Mr. Studd, Miss Short, Mr. Bannatyne, Lord Morley, Mr. J. H. Ley and others. The success of the pack in the field did the rest, and when the joint-masters, in 1911, handed over the entire management to Mr. Pape, the Haldon side had quite recovered its position, and, indeed, things were in a more satisfactory condition than they had been for many a year. It is only to be regretted that the number of shootings let to tenants keeps the coverts mostly closed to hounds until Christmas.

The Silverton is a pack of " irregulars." Its hound-list usually contains the names of some ten couple of foxhounds, a similar number of hounds with a harrier cross and some five or six couple of pure harriers. Some of the hounds are kept strictly to their own game ; others play a dual part, for the Silverton hunt hare one day a week besides their two days with fox. It is no disparagement to regular foxhound kennels to say that this blended pack admirably suits the rather special requirements of the Haldon country. It is my belief that a foxhound can hunt as low or as cold a scent as a harrier, but it is not always that he will take the trouble to do it. Especially is this the case where he is brought occasionally into a bad-scenting country like the Haldon from one carrying

a better scent to which he is accustomed. Everyone knows what a treasure a good road-hunter is in a pack, and on Haldon foxes frequently run the roads for very considerable distances. A harrier's patience gives him an advantage in such circumstances. Then, again, a foxhound draws best on a good-scenting day, when there is a scent to draw him into thick covert—I speak of countries where foxes are scarce and where hounds are not continually drawing coverts where they always find. A harrier, on the other hand, is a busy, inquisitive individual and pokes his nose everywhere. Tongue, too, and plenty of it, is of the first importance in the big woodlands. It is safe to say that, once fairly settled to a fox, the Silverton rarely leave him; and though, in such a hollow country as Haldon, a certain number naturally get to ground, the average of kills is very high. With such a pack, and with a huntsman like Mr. Pape, quiet, observant, relying greatly upon his hounds, and with a perseverance that never tires, the sport on and around Haldon during the past few years has been excellent. Reference has been made earlier to the number of wild fallow deer that infest the country. It is sufficient to say that the master has overcome this difficulty like the rest, and with the aid of his whipper-in, Jack Davie, has got the pack absolutely steady. Mr. J. Shelley, son of Sir John Shelley, acted as an additional whip for the two seasons immediately before the war. Like so many others, he is now serving his country abroad. May his return to his more peaceful occupation be safe and speedy! Mr. Pape himself has recently joined up, having accepted a commission in the Devon Regiment. In his absence, Mrs. Pape attends to the business of the hunt, and the pack is hunted by the whipper-in.

MR. A. G. PAPE

Master of the Silverton

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The following were, until war broke out, among the regular followers of the Silverton on Haldon: Miss Annesley, Miss Bannatyne, Misses Hay, Mrs. Palairet, Miss E. Studd, Miss Wilkinson, Major Bannatyne,[1] Captain Naper, Captain Woolcombe-Adams, Dr. Waddeton-Smith, Rev. L. Harris Arundell, Messrs. Acland Troyte, W. H. Allen, the late H. F. Carr (hon. sec.), C. S. Carr, R. J. and J. C. Collings, W. F. Coombe, Dr. Cutcliffe, F. Cottrell, N. T. Dray, W. H. Gould, J. D. P. Goodwin, R. E. Hancock, H. B. Lowndes, L. C. H. Palairet, J. Paul, H. G. Rew, J. Rowell, J. F. Shelley, H. G. Shrubb, J. Symes, J. M. Wilcocks, W. H. Worrall and M. Wyatt Edgell.

Yet another portion of the South Devon country, sufficient in extent, with the addition of a small loan from the Dartmoor, to support a pack two days a week, is separately hunted. This is the portion loaned to Mr. Brunskill, which he hunts with a private pack. It coincides very nearly with the country Sir Henry Seale formerly hunted with his private pack. It is bounded on the west from Diptford by the river Avon and the sea. The northern boundary follows the roads from Diptford to Morleigh and Morleigh to Halwell and Harbertonford, and the river Harbourne from there to the Dart. The latter river, with the sea, forms the eastern boundary. These boundaries include the loan from the Dartmoor.

This pack was formed, as previously mentioned, in 1914. Having carried out his engagement to hunt the country during that season, in which, by the way, he shewed some excellent sport, Mr. Brunskill felt himself free to put his services at the disposal of his country.

[1] This gallant soldier and good sportsman has since died of wounds received in action in France.

He joined the Wilts Yeomanry and is now expecting very shortly to be sent abroad on active service.

The question then arose as to the fate of the pack and the future of the newly formed hunt. After careful deliberation, it was decided to keep on the hounds, and Mrs. Brunskill undertook, not only to perform the duties of master, but also *to hunt the pack herself*. Those who know Mrs. Brunskill and who have noted her knowledge of the sport will not be surprised to learn that she is acquitting herself remarkably well. Such an undertaking is a serious one. The work of a huntsman, in the field alone, is very hard. The many moments of relaxation enjoyed by the irresponsible members of the field are denied to a huntsman. His body is at work most of the day and his mind all of it, and few things are more fatiguing than the combined exhaustion of body and brain. One or two lady-masters hunt their own harriers, but I know of none other who has tried her hand with foxhounds. Mrs. Brunskill is admirably supported by the farmers and by the field, and all are anxious to help her in every way possible. It is to be hoped that her spirited action will result in keeping the hunt together until such time as her husband is free to return home.

Such is the story of the South Devon Hunt. To some, the story and, indeed, the very thought of hunting will seem a mockery amid the appalling happenings of these times. Others, more thoughtful, will see in those very happenings the realization of the claims long put forward in defence of the sport and the greatest justification for its continuance. They recognize that there is no school like the hunting-field for training up a vigorous manhood. In

the hunting-field a man learns discipline and self-restraint, his perceptions are quickened, his physical powers developed, his endurance hardened and his courage put to the test. Habits of observation and self-reliance, resource in difficulties and determination in surmounting obstacles are acquired there as they are nowhere else. Valuable attributes, these, for the soldier, more especially for him who, but for field sports, would be a stranger to toil or hardship of any sort. Not only so, but in these days when roads are made too dangerous to ride upon, it is fair to say that outside the hunting community the art of riding and the knowledge of horsekeeping has died out among the people. The South Devon has trained its share of those who are now defending the Empire in the greatest war of all time. It is up to the ladies of the hunt and those men who are past the fighting age to keep alive an institution that has survived many wars, great and small, and many other difficulties that have threatened it from time to time during an existence of over a hundred years.

NOTE ON THE MAP

FOR reasons which appear earlier in these pages, the red boundary of the South Devon country includes what, under existing conditions, is the Mid-Devon country. The division between the two hunts is shewn by a broken red line. The boundaries of the Mid-Devon were defined for me by Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. Gilbert Spiller. It is only fair to say that Mr. A. W. Luxton, the master, and Mr. J. A. Tattershall, the honorary secretary of the Eggesford, after consultation with members of their committee, do not agree the exact line given as the northern boundary of the Mid-Devon. They place it somewhat further to the south from the neighbourhood of Belstone to Spreyton and a mile or two beyond. I have, however, adopted the line which Mr. Hayter-Hames and Mr. Spiller were good enough to lay down with great nicety, for the reason that both those gentlemen have been intimately acquainted with the hunt and the country all their lives, and have been masters of the Mid-Devon, at one time or another, for an aggregate period of eleven seasons.

The line of division shewn between the Eggesford and the South Devon proper in the neighbourhood of Crediton is that which I understand the Eggesford claims as its south-eastern boundary.

The extreme north-eastern corner of the South Devon calls for explanation. For reasons stated presently, I have adopted as the boundary that given

by Sheet No. 19 of Stanford's *Map of England and Wales coloured to shew the Fox-Hunts*, published on the 1st of January, 1877, as far as the point where the Tiverton now come in. Stanford's map carries the South Devon even further to the north. Sir Ian Amory, however, has kindly marked what he claims to be the present Tiverton boundary, and there can be no question as to the accuracy of his claim.

I am aware that *Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas*, which is before me, does not extend the north-eastern corner of the South Devon as far as does Stanford's map. Hobson carries it no further than the London and South-Western Railway, which he calls the "Taw Valley Railway." It will be noted that this gives the Tiverton considerably more country than is claimed by its present master. It is possible—though this is only conjecture—that Mr. Tom Carew came down with the Tiverton as far as the railway by permission at the time his cousin, Sir Walter Carew, hunted the South Devon country from Haccombe. It looks, indeed, as if the colouring of Hobson's map of Devonshire hunts had been made to fit such areas as were actually hunted by a particular pack at that moment, ignoring loans of country and hunting rights which were not then exercised. The northern half of Dartmoor, for instance, is not coloured at all; neither is a large tract that encircles it on the west, north and east; and Sir Henry Seale's country, which is known to have been made up of loans from the South Devon and Dartmoor, is shewn as a separate country.[1] *Hobson's Atlas* is not dated, but

[1] So is Mr. Roe's. This appears to have been included by mistake. Both the *New Sporting Magazine* and *Gêlert's Guide* class it among harrier packs, and the latter work contains this remark:—

"Mr. Roe's harriers are not *foxhounds* as would appear by advertisements in the London papers; they are well-bred harriers, and, *of course*, confine themselves to their own game."

it seems pretty clear, from the railways and hunts that it gives, that it was published between 1845 and 1849. This was Tom Lane's period, and we have his own statement in a letter, dated in 1878, that he had more country than he could manage to hunt.

Even so, the London and South-Western Railway, as boundary, gives a more ample margin in the north-east than the South Devon is ever likely to want to avail itself of. The point is one of academic interest rather than of practical importance, but, all things considered, Stanford's map seems to be the one on which most reliance can be placed.[1]

A considerable part of the country on the South Devon side of the present Tiverton boundary was for many years hunted by an old-established pack called the Tremlett. Like many others in Devon, this pack was originally a harrier pack ; it then took to hunting foxes as well as hares, and, in course of time, developed into a foxhound pack. It first figures as such in the *Field* annual table of hunts for the year 1893.

Sir John Shelley was a staunch supporter of the Tremlett and for some years its master, at first jointly with Mr. John Tremlett, and afterwards alone. In the year 1893, in answer to an enquiry which, as honorary secretary for the Haldon side, I made respecting an announcement that the Tremlett were to meet at Dunsford (which should have been Dunsford Wood), Sir John Shelley wrote as follows :—

" We have, by permission of the authorities of the South Devon, Lord Haldon and Mr. Studd, and at the

[1] The reputation of Messrs. Stanford is a guarantee that every care would have been taken to ensure the accuracy of this map. In corroboration, I may mention that the late Mr. Alec Munro, who was master of the Dartmoor at the time it was in course of preparation, since told me that he was consulted about that hunt and that great pains were taken. It is fair to assume that similar care was exercised with regard to other hunts.

request and desire of Mr. Fulford of Great Fulford, drawn the country from Steps Bridge to Clifford Bridge and including Fulford, Carnalls, Hackworthy Brake and many other small coverts up to the Exeter and Okehampton road. I am quite ready to acknowledge that permission was given by the South Devon Exeter Division. . . ."

Nothing was said as to the rest of the Tremlett country, either because it was not germane to my question, or because Sir John did not look upon it as South Devon country.

The Tremlett Hunt, however, ceased to exist about the year 1902.

A few years later, the Silverton Harriers turned their attention to hunting foxes and extended their country to include, in addition to a loan from the Tiverton, a certain part of the old Tremlett country. No objection was taken by the South Devon; neither was any permission considered necessary until the Silverton, in the season 1908–9, desiring to come south of the Exeter and Okehampton road, applied for and obtained leave to hunt the Haldon side of the South Devon, or so much of it as was not then loaned to the master of the Mid-Devon. The Silverton had a short separate existence as a foxhound pack for about three seasons, after which it reverted to the dual arrangement of hunting both fox and hare.

We have seen that Whitestone Wood, Pynes and Killerton were fixtures in the early days—the days of King, Carew and Haworth. How far since those days the South Devon has exercised or claimed any rights in the region in question, I am unable to say. Mr. Studd writes from the Front that he cannot remember how far he drew north of the Okehampton road, beyond certain coverts belonging to Mr. Drew,

but that he is sure he never drew Whitestone or Newton Woods; and those coverts have certainly not been drawn by the South Devon since his time.

In the face of the above facts, it seems to me that there is no pack in a position to claim against the South Devon in the region in question until the Tiverton country is reached. I therefore feel compelled to leave the boundary (with the modification referred to) such as I find it in 1877, always assuming the accuracy of Stanford's map of that date. To others must be left the question, if it should ever arise, whether the mere non-hunting of a particular district is sufficient to operate as an abandonment of it and how far such circumstances apply to the case under consideration.

The western boundary presents no difficulty. From Post Bridge, where the Mid-Devon gives place to the South Devon, I am indebted to Mrs. Brunskill, in the absence on service of her husband, for the definition of the frontier line between the South Devon and the Dartmoor. Mrs. Brunskill is well qualified to speak with authority. Mr. Coryton, the master of the Dartmoor, has been kind enough to check and confirm this boundary, with the one exception that he differs from Mrs. Brunskill by placing Hood Ball, Velwell and Brownstone on the Dartmoor side of the line. I have adopted his correction.

As will be seen from the map, the country on the south and east runs to the sea and the river Exe.

PRINCIPAL PLACES OF MEETING

Name	No. on Map
Afton Brook, Berry	68
Alston Cross	50
Aptor Farm, Berry	71
Berry Castle	69
Blagdon Barton	70
Challacombe	16
Chercombe Bridge	56
Cockingford Mill	35
Cockington	74
Denbury Green	62
Forches Cross	43
Furzeleigh Mill	59
Goodstone Gate	51
Granite Lodge, Stover	38
Grendon	28
Half-way House, Ashburton Rd.	52
Heatree	18
Heytor Buildings	29
Holne Bridge	48
Ilsington	36
Jay's (or Jane's) Grave	19
Kennels	61
Kingskerswell	65
Lupton	81
Manaton Green	29
Maypool	86
Natsworthy	17
New Bridge	47
New Buildings	29
New Inn	42
Ogwell	55
Penn Inn	57
Poundsgate	45
Primley	73
Reddaford Water	21
Red Post	67
Rising Sun, Woodland	53
Rock Hotel	29
Rolster Bridge	76
Round House, Haccombe	58
Rowden Gate	33
Sharpham	78
Shinners Bridge	66
Sigford	41
Smoky House	72
Spitchwick	46
Star Inn, Stover	37
Travellers' Rest	54
Two Mile Oak	63
Waddeton Court	80
Warren Inn	15
Welstor Cross	49
Whiddon Arch	64
Widdecombe-in-the-Moor	34
Wolston Green	60
Yarner	30

HALDON SIDE

(On Loan to the Silverton)

Beggar's Bush	23
Bellamarsh	21
Black Forest Lodge	26
Bridford	7
Canonteign	11
Castle Dyke	32
Cofton Cross	27
Crocombe Bridge	22
Dunsford	4
Haldon Belvedere	9
Haldon Race Stand	13
Jackdaw Inn, Oxton	25
Lamb Inn, Longdown	2
Lindridge	40
Peamore Arch	6
Pocomb Bridge	3
Powderham Arch	10
Round O	14
Sandy Gate	39
Sixth Milestone, Okehampton Road	1
Teign House Inn	8
Thorns	24
Whiteway	12
Windy Cross	5
Wood	44

"SIR HENRY SEALE'S OLD COUNTRY"

(On Loan to Mr. Brunskill)

Blackawton Forces	84
Bow Bridge	77
Buckland-Tout-Saints	88
Capton	85
Crabbaton Gate	75
Dittisham	79
Fallapit	87
Halwell	83
Slapton	89
Stanborough Gate	82

NOTE: The numbers on the Map run consecutively from left to right in lines of greater or less width, beginning at the top.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Reprinted from *The Western Morning News*

A Devon Hunt in 1823

THE CHASE OF THE BAGGED FOX

[To the Editor of *The Western Morning News*]

SIR,—I have just come across an account of a run which took place on January 9th, 1823, with hounds then kept by Mr. George Templer, of Stover, near Newton (the present residence of Mr. Harold St. Maur), which may interest some of your readers. The pack were called the "Catch 'em Alives," as they were never allowed—if it could be prevented—to kill their fox. The Mr. Taylor mentioned was the Rev. Harry Taylor, of Ogwell, who for many years was the much-respected rector of South Pool, near Kingsbridge, and who was a noted horseman of his day and owned a wonderful little horse called "Nunkey," which was given him by an uncle.

Old Sportsman.

DEVON FOX-HUNTING

An extraordinary pack of dwarf foxhounds are kept by George Templer, Esq., of Stover House, about 14 miles below Exeter, not far from the great turnpike-road leading from that place to Plymouth. They are never allowed to have blood, if it can be prevented, and, what is singular, they very seldom miss a fox. They are followed by such determined sportsmen and good riders, with the best of horses, that it seldom happens but that some are up when the fox is taken, to rescue him from the hounds before they have the power to kill him, and he is taken alive and kept for another

day's sport. Mr. Templer has at this time nearly twenty brace of foxes in reserve, which he keeps in courts fitted up for their accommodation.

On Thursday, the 9th January, 1823, these hounds had one of the best days for the season. At 12 o'clock precisely a very fine vixen fox, which was dug two days before by the huntsman to Sir Henry Carew's harriers, was unbagged before a large field of sportsmen at the Old Decoy, belonging to Lord Courtenay, near Newton Abbot. After going off in a most gallant style he made a short round to Wolborough Church, and crossing the Totnes turnpike road he ran the country in a circle for about four miles to the place where he was first turned out, when, making another turn, catching the wind, and having lost his country, he made away for Ipplepen, Denbury, and Ingsdon, where, turning to the right, he gained the coverts of Bradley, which re-echoed with the delightful music of this steady pack, and the cheers of the sportsmen. He then crossed a branch of the river Teign under Bradley House, from whence he ascended the steep hills to Highweek Village, where a check of some minutes occurred, owing to the fox having got into some gardens and about the outhouses of the village, but being halloed away again by some people at work, and bending again to the right, he faced the open country of Bovey Heathfield, where he swam the canal belonging to Mr. Templer twice, and, threading his large plantations on the border of the heath, he ultimately gained a small one belonging to Lord Clifford, near Chudleigh, where he was run into and safely secured by some of the gentlemen, who were up before the hounds had done him any injury. Thus ended a chase of upwards of two hours, having gone over a country of nearly 25 miles—a chase that gave the greatest satisfaction to a most numerous field of the best sportsmen of the country. The extraordinary height of perfection to which the discipline of a pack of hounds of the highest blood is brought is worthy the attention of every sportsman. Mr. Harry Taylor, of Ogwell House, so manages this pack that he turns down the fox immediately before their noses, and although not a word is spoken nor a whip moved not a dog stirs until the law given

the fox is up, when Mr. Templer by the single word "Now" bids them to the chase, when they immediately rush like a cloud to the scent, and go away in the most gallant style; and the sportsmen have then nothing to do but to make their nags put the best leg foremost, or they have no chance of seeing a hound again for that chase. We believe no pack in the kingdom throughout a season shows better sport, have longer or severer chases, or draw together better fields of sportsmen than these hounds. On the occasion of this grand run there were about 50 or 60 of the first characters in the country as sportsmen in the field, among which were Sir Lawrence Palk, of Haldon (who keeps a stud of seven or eight horses at Melton, in Leicestershire, and is a liberal subscriber to the Melton Hounds), Sir Henry Carew, Sir John Louis, Miss Templer, Harry Taylor, Walter Carew, Cresswell, Digby Fowell, of Fowlescombe, Carey, Burlton, Garrow, Kitsons (4), Hole, Pollard, Charles Seale, Pinson. In the course of this long chase there was a great deal of good, straightforward riding displayed, and many strong leaps taken and some four or five swam their horses through the canal twice after the hounds. Amongst the desperate leaps taken we cannot help noticing one taken by Mr. H. Taylor on his bay horse Nunkey, in which he was followed by one other only, Mr. Digby Fowell, on his chestnut mare, by Revel. It was a stone wall, above five feet, built across a lane that was ordered to be stopped up, except for foot passengers, and there were steps on each side for their accommodation. Not another man, although the greater part of the field were well up, dared to trust himself or his horse at this leap; and had not the fox made a lucky turn just after to the right, very few would have seen a hound again until the check in Highweek village, which let in most of the slow and easy gentlemen, though, indeed, the whole run gave general satisfaction, as there was plenty of steady hunting, as well as a continuance of chase at their best pace.

APPENDIX B

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE SOUTH DEVON HUNT

Passed at a General Meeting of the Hunt, convened by public advertisement, held at Newton Abbot on the 24th April, 1912, *and an adjournment thereof on the 22nd May,* 1912.

Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on the 30th April, 1913.

1. The business and affairs of the South Devon Hunt shall be managed by the Members of the Hunt for the time being as hereinafter defined, with the exception of such matters as are hereinafter authorized to be dealt with by the Committee.

2. Members of the South Devon Hunt shall consist of:—

(*a*) Owners of land within the Hunt limits of 200 acres in extent and upwards:

(*b*) Lessees of shooting rights within the Hunt limits of 500 acres in extent and upwards:

(In the case of a shooting being rented by several persons jointly, only one of such persons shall be entitled to membership.)

(*c*) Tenant farmers and farmers farming their own land within the Hunt limits of 50 acres in extent and upwards:

(*d*) Annual subscribers to the Hunt of £5 or upwards (exclusive of subscriptions to any existing separate damage fund).

3. The Committee of the Hunt shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall consist of 15 members, 5 of

whom shall be elected from class (*c*), and the remainder from the other members of the Hunt.

The Committee shall have power from time to time if they think fit, to co-opt, as additional members of the Committee, such further persons not exceeding two in number, as from their position or influence in the Country the Committee shall think it desirable in the interest of the Hunt to add to the Committee.

The Committee shall remain in office for one year and be eligible for re-election. A casual vacancy on the Committee may be filled by the Committee.

4. A Chairman and a Vice-Chairman shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting from the members of the Committee, and shall hold office for one year, and shall be eligible for re-election. A casual vacancy in the Chairmanship or Vice-chairmanship may be filled by the Committee. The Chairman, when present, or, failing him, the Vice-Chairman, shall preside at all General and Committee Meetings, and in his absence a temporary Chairman shall be elected by those present.

5. An Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer shall be elected at every Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election. A casual vacancy in the Secretaryship or Treasurership may be filled at any General Meeting. The Honorary Secretary shall be entitled to take part in discussions and to vote at General or Committee Meetings whether otherwise qualified or not.

6. Any person elected to fill a casual vacancy under the three preceding rules shall hold office only until the next succeeding Annual General Meeting unless then re-elected.

7. The Committee shall be elected by Ballot, and only those who are proposed and seconded by members of the Hunt, and whose nominations are sent to the Honorary Secretary three weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting in May, shall be qualified for election.

8. An Annual General Meeting of Members shall be held at the Globe Hotel, Newton Abbot, or at such other con-

venient place as the Chairman (or failing him the Honorary Secretary) may decide, during the month of May in every year.

9. A General Meeting may be convened at any time by the Chairman or by a resolution of the Committee, and shall be convened by the Honorary Secretary on a written requisition signed by any ten Members. Twelve shall form a quorum. All General Meetings shall be convened by public advertisement in at least two newspapers, giving at least ten clear days' notice thereof.

10. A Special Meeting shall be convened for the 3rd Wednesday in January in every year for the purpose of making or considering arrangements for hunting the Country during the following season, unless that matter is already provided for by the arrangements then in existence.

11. A Committee Meeting may be convened at any time by the Chairman, and shall be convened by the Honorary Secretary on a written requisition signed by three members of the Committee. Five shall form a quorum.

12. No business, except general business or urgent business, shall be transacted at any Meeting other than the business appearing on the Notice convening the Meeting, or business arising thereout.

13. All matters, other than the election of Committee, shall be decided by the votes of the majority of those present and voting at any Meeting. The Chairman shall have a casting vote.

14. The Committee shall have the control and management of all matters affecting the internal economy of the Hunt: such as Tenancy and repair of Kennels, administration of funds, establishment and administration of separate damage or poultry or wire funds, questions of capping, payment of Keepers and earth stoppers and their annual Dinner, &c., and also, in the event of the country being hunted by the Committee, the engagement and dismissal of Hunt servants and purchase and sale of horses and hounds, &c.

15. The Committee shall have power to deal with and dispose of all questions arising between the Hunt and any other Hunt, including questions of boundaries and temporary loans of country, and all questions arising between any individual and the Hunt, and any questions between any individual and the Master or between individual members that may be submitted to the Committee, and all questions of hunting law or other like questions.

16. A record of all proceedings at Meetings shall be entered in Minute books.

17. All Hunt funds from whatever source (including proceeds of " caps ") shall be paid to the Honorary Treasurer or to such Banking Account or Accounts as he or the Committee shall determine.

18. The Hunt accounts shall be audited every year and the balance sheet and list of subscribers shall be submitted and produced at the Annual General Meeting.

19. The hunting season shall be deemed to begin on the 1st November and end on the 1st May.

20. Subscriptions to the Hunt shall be on the following scale and shall become due on the 1st November. No subscriber shall be entitled to vote at any General or Committee Meeting, though otherwise qualified, until his subscription due on the preceding 1st November shall be paid.

The minimum subscription for all persons resident in the South Devon Hunt and hunting with the pack (except farmers and puppy walkers who shall be exempt) shall be £5 5s. 0d. A " cap " of 5s. per day shall be payable by non-subscribers limited to four days in the season. The Honorary Secretary shall have power to accept a smaller subscription in special circumstances.

21. The Master for the time being shall be entitled, without consulting the Committee, to give permission in writing to any other pack to draw any part of the South Devon country a reasonable number of days in any one season; but no general permission shall be given, or loan made of any part

of the country, without the express sanction of the Committee. What is a reasonable number for the purposes of this rule shall be determined by the Committee.

22. No rule shall be altered or rescinded and no new rule shall be made except at an Annual General Meeting, or until the Committee have had an opportunity of considering and discussing the same. Notice of any proposed alteration or rescission of any rule or of any new rule shall be given in writing to the Honorary Secretary three weeks prior to such Annual General Meeting, and the notice convening such Meeting shall state the number of the rule proposed to be altered or rescinded, or that a new rule is to be proposed.

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF DEVONSHIRE TERMS

Bottom : See Goyal.

Clitter (or Clatter) : An irregular heap of granite boulders. Clitters are found mostly on hillsides and are said to be the result of decay of the Tors (q.v.).

Coombe : A valley between two steep hills.

Cry of the river : A striking effect produced by the sound of rushing water peculiar to the Dart. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould quotes the following couplet :

> "The Dart, the Dart—the cruel Dart
> Every year demands a heart."

And the river is represented as crying for its prey.

Forest : Dartmoor was once, like Exmoor, a Royal Forest, i.e. a place where beasts of forest were preserved for the King. The term does not imply the existence of trees (e.g. Scotch deer forest). Dartmoor is still spoken of as a forest, though no longer such legally, it having passed into private hands.

Flying-fence : A term used to distinguish a hedge or other fence that a horse clears in his stride, from a bank on which he alights before jumping off it.

Goyal (or Goyle) : The washed-out bed of an old stream or torrent at the bottom of a valley or coombe.

In-country : All country other than moorland.

Linhay : A shed.

Newtake : A piece of land taken in from the moor or open commons and enclosed with a wall or other fence.

Pocket: An opening in the face of the moor, made by miners.

Scat: Plastered, e.g. with mud.

Shippens: Houses or yards for cattle or sheep (i.e. probably a corruption of sheep-pens).

Stickle: The broken water running over shallows of a river.

Swale (v.): The act of burning heather, &c., on moors or commons, to improve the pasturage.

Tor: "The tors—Nature's towers—are huge masses of granite on the tops of the hills . . . piled one upon another in Nature's own fantastic way" (Rev. S. Baring-Gould).

Turf-ties: The name given to the pits where the turf is cut for fuel.

Unlight (v.): To dismount.

Up-country: A term used in referring to any country other than Devon or Cornwall.

Vein: The Vein, or Vein-Country, is the name given to a vast tract of bog-land in the northern part of Dartmoor. Hence, "veiny ground" means any boggy ground. The word is probably merely the local pronunciation of "fen."

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